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General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

54th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 20 November 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chau, (Viet Nam), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 22 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(a) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/122)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.18)

(b) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/87)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.11)

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/254)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.26)

(d) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.23)

(e) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/266 and A/57/266/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.25)

(f) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/119)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.22)

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/358)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.29)

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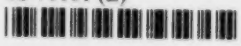

(h) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.38)

(i) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/128)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.24)

(j) Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/386)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.32)

(k) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (A/57/576)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.31)

(l) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/217)

(m) Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.39)

(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/267)

(o) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/405)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.28)

(p) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/475)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.21)

(q) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission (A/57/255)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.40)

(r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

Report of the Secretary-General(A/57/94, A/57/94/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.30)

(s) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations

Draft resolution (A/57/L.16)

Mr. Fadaifard (Islamic Republic of Iran): I should like at the outset to convey my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for all his comprehensive and informative reports under agenda item 22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". All those reports certainly deserve great attention and merit extensive review by this body. In the meantime, I would like to take this opportunity to focus on three reports of the Secretary-General, namely, those relating to cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization.

The report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference", contained in document A/57/405, demonstrates that the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) have been working in close cooperation on wide-ranging issues in their common search for solutions to global problems, including questions relating to international peace and security, disarmament, self-determination, decolonization, fundamental human rights and economic and social development.

The Charter of the United Nations encourages activities through regional cooperation for the promotion of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. My delegation therefore believes that deepening relations between the two organizations through high-level contacts, regular consultations and technical meetings could contribute to the fulfilment of the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Fortunately, in recent years new avenues for better and strengthened cooperation between the OIC and the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies have been explored. Significant progress in this field has been made in the widespread cooperation between the OIC and its subsidiary bodies and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The two organizations continued to refine their joint cooperation to better reflect and respond to the priorities of their member States — which are also the priorities agreed upon in the general meetings between the United Nations and the OIC — such as education, the eradication of illiteracy, the development of science and technology, human resource development and the environment.

My delegation also hopes that the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system, particularly the lead agencies, provide increased technical and other forms of assistance to the OIC and its subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated institutions in order to enhance cooperation.

In view of the future cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC, I believe that combating Islamophobia is one area with regard to which both organizations could consider taking joint action. There should be no doubt that the bigoted and defamatory remarks against Islam that are sometimes widely broadcast by the far-reaching media of the United States hurt 1.2 billion Muslims everywhere and have an adverse impact on them across the globe, thus harming the quest for furthering understanding within the international community. At a time when the United Nations is at the forefront of efforts aimed at enhancing peace and harmony among nations and followers of different faiths in the world, we believe that we need to look into such Islamophobia and see what the United Nations, in association with the OIC, can do to thwart it.

Given the fact that there already exist areas of suspicion and disagreement between the West and the Islamic world, we are concerned that the recent surge in bigotry against Islam amounts to adding fuel to the fire and exacerbates the situation. While those who indulge in damaging rhetoric are acting irresponsibly, we can still be optimistic about Member States appreciating the importance of the issue and uniting to check the growth of this tendency.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC may provide for some activities, including awareness-raising, encouraging Member States to take actions and alerting the media to the adverse impact of Islamophobia on peace and harmony at the international level. Inasmuch as misinformation and misperceptions reside at the origin of the problem, access through United Nations channels, in which the OIC should actively participate, may have an important effect.

Cooperation and joint programmes and projects between the United Nations system and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) should be promoted and encouraged, particularly between ECO and bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Telecommunication Union, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). UNDP should be more involved in the area of capacity-building with the ECO secretariat and its relevant programmes. Cooperation with UNCTAD in the areas of transit transport, regional investment and trade efficiency is expected to progress further since there are ample opportunities to strengthen that type of cooperation.

ESCAP, as the main regional commission dealing with our region, continued to be very active individually and in cooperation and collaboration with other bodies within the United Nations system and other development and financial institutions in the ECO region. There are still enormous opportunities for expanding such cooperation between ESCAP and ECO, and it should be extended to new areas, including the area of social environment. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), another United Nations regional commission, can also play a similar role, particularly in assisting the Central Asian members of ECO.

My delegation welcomes the new phase of cooperation between UNDCP AND ECO for coordinating the control of illicit drugs, cooperation of UNFPA with ECO in addressing HIV/AIDS and adolescent health, and FAO collaboration with ECO in developing the agricultural sector and food security. We are quite confident that new fields of cooperation can be explored jointly and can be operationalized with other agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, by addressing the social aspects of combating narcotic drugs, particularly their main victims — women and children. The United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization and the World Tourism Organization should also become more active with ECO in the area of cultural development and tourism.

Furthermore, the region also continues to be afflicted by the problem of the illicit cultivation, production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs, whose serious adverse impact on the social, economic and security infrastructure of the regional countries is well known to the international community. There should be a comprehensive strategy at various levels to address this major socio-economic challenge to the region. Strengthening economic performance, the expansion of trade and investment, as well as poverty eradication in the region, are the major components of such a strategy.

Undoubtedly, the reconstruction of Afghanistan, especially reviving its economy through international assistance and regional cooperation, can contribute enormously to the success of that strategy. While addressing that issue, let me add that the reconstruction of Afghanistan is one of the major priorities of the ECO member States. ECO is establishing trilateral cooperation with third countries as the most viable and cost effective option for expanding economic and trade cooperation between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, which is vital to reviving its economy.

Finally, I would like to make some comments on the report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization", contained in document A/57/122. As the report illustrates, the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) continues to carry out systematic and consistent analyses of the agenda items of the Sixth Committee and the International Law Commission from Asian and African perspectives.

Commentaries and recommendations of this organization remain a source of inspiration for its member States in their deliberations on issues before the General Assembly and continue to be reflected directly or indirectly in the proceedings of the legal organs of the United Nations. The wide range of topics on the AALCO agenda is indicative of that organization's resolve to positively contribute to collective efforts aimed at tackling the new challenges of the international community. AALCO closely monitors legal developments relating to international economic cooperation for development and continues to keep that issue on its agenda.

The question of refugees — a topic on which the organization has done a lot of work — trade law matters, crime prevention and combating corruption have also been the subject of study and deliberation by the organization. Cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO has proved to be fruitful and has served the mutual interests of the two organizations. That collaboration has been developed further in recent years and is being carried out in several forums, covering various subjects of great importance to the international community as a whole. We feel that prospects for future cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO are promising.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations is in many ways an important issue. Let me begin by mentioning a few of the reasons that underline the importance of the issue. First, regional and other international organizations are often being called upon to provide expert assistance and advice to complement the efforts of the United Nations. Secondly, effective cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations can lead to increased cost-efficiency, broader outreach and legitimacy, while simultaneously minimizing the danger of duplication. Needless to say, the European Union is therefore very supportive of efforts aimed at broadening and deepening well-functioning cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. The European Union commends the Secretary-General for the reports that have been presented on this subject. They provide a clear and informative overview, and form an excellent basis for our debate today.

The European Union remains very supportive of the chosen approach of conducting a single joint debate on all the agenda items concerning cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. Allow me to discuss a few aspects of this debate that the European Union considers to be of particular importance.

The European Union warmly welcomes the establishment of the new African Union at its Summit in Durban in July. The European Union considers the African Union as the central organization for the regional integration of the African continent. The creation of the African Union is a landmark event that could give Africa a new start. The European Union particularly welcomes the strong emphasis on the links among peace, stability, good governance and development that is embedded in the African Union. In that context, the European Union fully supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as an Africa-owned and Africa-led initiative. The European Union considers that NEPAD provides an excellent basis for a new partnership between Africa and the international community. A central feature of NEPAD is that it recognizes an operational link between economic growth and development and the NEPAD principles of political and economic good governance, the rule of law, democratization and respect for human rights. NEPAD has the potential to pave the way for the new African Union and to give it real content.

The implementation of NEPAD can be fostered by enhanced regional cooperation. In that respect, the European Union attaches great importance to the dialogue between the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the European Union. The ministerial conference between SADC and the European Union held in Maputo from 7 to 8 November 2002 welcomed the formulation of the Regional Indicative Programme and the process of regional integration as the basis for future European Union support. Furthermore, the conference acknowledged that regional organizations play a special role in conflict-prevention, conflict-resolution and peacekeeping, and that this role should be reinforced.

As an active participant in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union attaches great significance to the implementation of the Platform for Cooperative Security. It underlines the importance of cooperation between the OSCE and other international organizations on the basis of their comparative advantages. The heart of the OSCE is its comprehensive concept of security, covering the political-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension, and the human rights dimension. The OSCE is promoting security, democracy and human rights in all three dimensions.

The fight against terrorism has been at the forefront of the cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations. In adopting the Bucharest Plan of Action and the Bishkek Programme of Action last year, the OSCE underscored its resolve to contribute to the international anti-terrorism strategy led by the United Nations. A good example of such collaboration was the high-level meeting on terrorism held in Lisbon in June, where the United Nations and various international and regional organizations reaffirmed their commitment to the development of mutually reinforcing efforts. Such commitment is at the heart of the draft OSCE charter on preventing and combating terrorism, which is to be adopted at the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial Council in Porto.

When it comes to efforts at conflict prevention, crisis management and rehabilitation, the cooperation established between the OSCE field missions and the United Nations in the Balkans, Georgia and Tajikistan

remains successful. The European Union will continuously seek to foster coordination, cooperation and synergy among the OSCE, the United Nations and other international organizations working to promote security, stability, democracy and human rights in the OSCE region.

The European Union follows developments in Latin America very closely, and is concerned about the worsened economic situation in a number of countries, such as Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil. The European Union supports the efforts made by those countries to overcome the economic crisis, and also stands firmly behind the regional integration processes in the Common Market of the South, the Andean Community and Central America, which, in spite of political and economic difficulties in the region, have demonstrated the region's commitment to the development of democratic societies.

The European Union also follows closely developments in South-East Asia, and is concerned about the various terrorist treats in the region and about the many unsolved internal conflicts that contribute to political instability. In the light of the recent bomb attack in Bali and the incidents in the Philippines, the European Union fully supports the efforts made in the region and within the framework of the Association of South-East Asian Nations to further develop regional cooperation.

The European Union is prepared to continue its active support for, and cooperation with, the Caribbean Community on the creation of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

The European Union takes note of the positive cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum, and encourages the Secretary-General and the President of the Pacific Islands Forum to continue and strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Coordination and cooperation with the specialized agencies of the United Nations and with regional and other organizations should also be promoted.

The United Nations and the Council of Europe are complementary in their endeavours to protect and strengthen democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. In recent years, the United Nations and the Council of Europe have worked together closely on several missions and in the organization of United Nations special sessions and international conferences. In the wake of the attacks of 11 September 2001, the two organizations have increased their mutual cooperation in the international fight against terrorism. The States members of the European Union confirm their full support for the European Court of Human Rights and for the system of human rights protection in Europe, of which the Court is a central component.

The European Union attaches great importance to cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and it commends the two organizations for their efforts to develop appropriate cooperation procedures, including the invitation to the IPU to participate as an observer in the work of the General Assembly. It welcomes the initiatives taken by the two organizations to allow parliaments to contribute to major events organized by the United Nations. The European Union firmly believes that national parliaments, working through the IPU, can play a positive role in terms of complementing and supporting the work of the United Nations.

The European Union notes with satisfaction that cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference has been further developed during the past year. The periodic high-level meetings between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference are important to maintaining continuity in deepening the dialogue between the two organizations.

Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States is also of importance to the European Union. The Union is therefore pleased to note that the two organizations have established close contacts on a number of issues in a diverse array of fields, including politics, economics and culture.

The European Union is pleased to note that cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie has continued to expand over the past year. The cooperation covers many issues of common interest, not least in the fields of democracy, good governance and human rights.

The European Union is pleased to note the continuing cooperation between the United Nations and

the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. That body has continued to give firm support to United Nations efforts, in particular in the field of international security, arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. The European Union believes that the two organizations support and complement each other in their work for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

The European Union has always attached great importance to the activities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, particularly given the risk that such weapons might fall into the hands of terrorists. The European Union therefore strongly encourages the further development of cooperation and collaboration with the United Nations Secretariat in this field.

Let me conclude by emphasizing that enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations in many ways has the potential to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the organizations involved and at the same time to prevent the risk of duplication. The existing inter-institutional dialogue should therefore be continued and intensified, so as to strengthen the spirit of cooperation and coordination. The European Union strongly encourages the United Nations to continue its efforts to enhance cooperation with regional and other international organizations.

Mr. Cheah (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to participate in the debate on agenda item 22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". We attach particular importance to this debate because we realize the importance of consolidating the global efforts of the United Nations with those of regional and other intergovernmental organizations. We believe that there is an increasing need to enhance interaction and cooperation between the United Nations and these organizations in order for their respective efforts to be effective and mutually complementary.

In its statement on this item, my delegation will focus on cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the African Union (AU).

My delegation notes with satisfaction the cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. That cooperation, which began in 1947, was strengthened with the signing of the cooperation agreement between the United Nations and the IPU in 1996. The Secretary-General's report, contained in document A/57/375, has comprehensively detailed the various initiatives undertaken by both organizations in the areas of peace and security, economic and social development, issues related to children and women, international law, human rights, democracy, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime and terrorism.

It is indeed appropriate for the General Assembly to acknowledge the contribution of the IPU to the work of the Assembly and also important for the IPU to be allowed to participate in the work and activities of the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the granting by the General Assembly of observer status to the IPU yesterday. This will enable it to have a more meaningful, productive and significant relationship with the United Nations.

With regard to cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, my delegation would first of all like to thank the Secretary-General for his report, contained in document A/57/405. We warmly welcome the continued strengthening of relations between the United Nations and the OIC through high-level contacts, regular consultations and technical meetings. We are particularly pleased with the general meeting on cooperation between representatives of the United Nations system and of the OIC and its specialized institutions held in Vienna from 9 to 11 July 2002, providing for extensive exchanges in areas of common concern to both organizations. We welcome the identification of 10 agreed priority areas of cooperation and concur with the view that as cooperation expands new areas of interaction might be considered without prejudice to our priorities.

My delegation is delighted to note that the OIC has already participated in United Nations meetings and that, likewise, the United Nations has participated in OIC meetings. We believe that this denotes the positive role of both organizations and their high regard for each other as partners in the common search for solutions to global problems. In that regard, Malaysia looks forward to the participation of the United Nations at the tenth OIC Summit, to be held in Kuala Lampur in October 2003.

We recognize that since the OIC became an observer to the United Nations in 1975 important progress has been made in the cooperation between the two organizations in the political, economic and social areas. In fact, the OIC, including its subsidiary bodies, has entered into cooperation agreements with 13 United Nations specialized agencies, programmes and funds.

We look forward to the conclusion of the memorandum of understanding between the World Food Programme and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which will formalize and enhance relations between them and will pave the way for joint action in the field of education.

We are pleased that numerous joint initiatives are being undertaken and that more OIC countries are benefiting from them. Therefore, in its firm support for cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC, Malaysia confirms its full endorsement of draft resolution A/57/L.28, which was introduced by the representative of the Sudan.

My delegation associates itself fully with the statement by the Permanent Representative of Cambodia on behalf of ASEAN this morning. The United Nations and ASEAN have been and, I am confident, will continue to be important development partners in the years to come. Several United Nations agencies have provided strong support to ASEAN countries in diverse areas of, inter alia, poverty eradication, good governance, disaster prevention, the environment and the role of women in society.

In this regard, the role of the United Nations Development Programme and its long-standing relationship with ASEAN stands out and needs no elaboration. In the communiqué issued after the thirty-fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, held in Brunei Darussalam in July 2002, ASEAN Foreign Ministers affirmed the need for enhancing the organization's cooperation with the United Nations, as such cooperation will contribute to ASEAN's objectives of economic growth, sustainable development, social progress, cultural development and the promotion of peace and stability. Enhanced cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations is indeed laudable and achievable, and will certainly be of immense benefit to both organizations.

My delegation is also supportive of forging close cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations as a further development of the close and productive cooperation between the former Organization of African Unity and the world body. The draft resolution before the Assembly in document A/57/L.39 seeks to enhance and intensify that relationship and to bring to it a higher level of cooperation encompassing many areas, including trade and economic development, human rights, good governance and the strengthening of democratic institutions, in addition to the promotion of peace and security on the continent.

Given the special needs of Africa and the heavy involvement of the United Nations in African-related issues, it is only appropriate for the African Union to build on the solid relationship that has been established between the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations, particularly in the context of Africa's ambitious New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which will require a high level of international support.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that the draft resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations will receive the full support of the Assembly. Malaysia is convinced that the United Nations can only benefit from close cooperation with those organizations. Indeed, the forging of cooperation between so many regional and other organizations and the United Nations attests to the importance and centrality of the United Nations as the pre-eminent and most universal international Organization. It is also a manifestation of the abiding faith of the international community in multilateralism and in the United Nations at the centre of the process.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): The item that we are considering today, on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations, gives us an overview of the interaction that can exist between the United Nations and those organizations and of the potential for synergy in such cooperation, which, engaged in wisely, can reconcile the need to respect regional and local characteristics with the action of the international community, something that is no less necessary in assisting various areas than in acquiring the support that it needs.

In that context, I should like to address agenda item 22 (m), on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, which has assumed a special character this year because of the transformation of the Organization of African Unity

(OAU) into the African Union (AU) and the launching of NEPAD. The international community's welcoming of those major initiatives — confirmed by the General Assembly on 16 September with regard to the support of the United Nations system for NEPAD — calls for cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, taking into account the dynamic of institutional transformation. My delegation cannot fail to support the earlier position of the OAU with respect to considering a programme of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU for 2002, which believed that it would be more prudent to wait for the definition of the structures and functions of the new continental organization before proceeding with that exercise. We also think that today's debate can greatly contribute to the definition of terms for future cooperation between the two organizations.

The United Nations has the principal role with regard to strengthening the institutional capacities of the African Union and mobilizing international support for NEPAD's successful implementation. What is achieved on the African continent will depend greatly on that. Africa's economic and social development cannot be realized without stability, which promotes an environment of peace and security. That truth has been recognized by the principal organs of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — by the Secretary-General and by African countries themselves. We must work together with determination to put an end to all conflicts and tensions on the continent and to gather and mobilize energies for reconstruction and development.

The increasing and consistent participation of African contingents in peacekeeping missions is well demonstrated. That African commitment responds to the wishes of the Organization — particularly those of the Security Council — and points to the path towards truly fruitful cooperation in the future, particularly in the area of conflict prevention and settlement. In that regard, the recommendations of the Security Council ad hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Koonjul of Mauritius, aim to strengthen that cooperation through dialogue. We welcome those recommendations, and we call for their effective implementation.

Interaction between the Organization and the OAU mechanism for conflict prevention, management and settlement is a reality that will be enhanced and further structured by the forthcoming establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. However, for that cooperation to attain all its objectives, we must ensure that it does not simply transfer to African countries the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Under the terms of the Charter, that lies primarily with the United Nations, which has irreplaceable experience, precious human capacities and material resources that are difficult to acquire at the regional level.

Reading the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351) — whom I should like to thank for his commitment to Africa — allows one to measure the extent of cooperation that already exists between the United Nations and the African Union in such varied areas as economic and social development, humanitarian action, conflict prevention and settlement and peacekeeping. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the United Nations Secretariat's expressed willingness to help the African Union to establish new structures of its own. My delegation attaches the greatest importance to the success of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support project in planning the transition phase from the OAU to the AU, with its strategic objective of creating solid institutional capacities and a base of resources needed for the new organization.

Furthermore, my delegation would like to emphasize the exemplary quality of cooperation between the United Nations and the African organization in the area of decolonization, reflected in the joint elaboration of the United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara, which was confirmed by the General Assembly, endorsed by the Security Council and accepted by the parties to the conflict. It envisages the organization of a referendum on self-determination for the Saharawi people. That cooperation must continue, with a view to the future decolonization of the African continent's last non-self-governing Territory.

In addition, my delegation would like to stress the difficulties that face cooperation in the humanitarian sector. As a result of conflicts and natural disasters, the number of refugees in Africa has reached a disturbing level. The absence of appropriate infrastructures to deal with the flow of refugees makes it difficult — and in some cases impossible — for the host country to cope with such a situation by itself. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees must

scrupulously discharge the mandate entrusted to it, treating all the refugees of the world — whatever their race or origin — on a strictly equal basis, because there are no first-class or second-class refugees. It must no longer concern itself with the political settlement of conflicts, which remains the exclusive domain of Member States and of competent agencies and organs of the United Nations.

In addition, we note that the problem of resources continues to be acute. In several cases, consolidated appeals have been launched in vain. Therefore, we should like to reiterate those appeals to the international community to provide adequate assistance to the African Union and to the Governments of African countries affected by the problems of refugees, repatriated persons and displaced persons.

Lastly, I would like to speak on the struggle against terrorism. The scourge of transnational terrorism poses a global threat, from which nobody is free.

My delegation would call for even greater cooperation between our two organizations, with a view to implementing the OAU Convention on the Prevention and the Combating of Terrorism. It now has a sufficient number of accessions for it to enter into force. Last September's conference in Algiers offered a new impetus in this respect.

Mr. Mobarak (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I am pleased to convey to you and to Member States a tribute from the Egyptian parliamentarians, on whose behalf I speak. We fully believe in the importance of cooperation with the United Nations through the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Cooperation between these two bodies is a major objective of the Egyptian Parliament, and we are doing our utmost to encourage this, as we had done during Egypt's presidency of the IPU, from 1995 to 1999.

We are very pleased that the IPU was unanimously accorded observer status by the United Nations. Given the shortening of distances between States, peoples and cultures caused by the effects of globalization, and the repercussions this has engendered on the internal and external policies of nations and their relations with one another, it is high time for national parliaments to extend their activities beyond their national borders, and not confine themselves to national policies and legislation. They should enter world politics to affect its course in a positive manner.

We are calling here for a strengthened role for world parliaments in global politics. States must, at the national level, live up to the commitments made by their Governments to international treaties and agreements. There is an increasing phenomenon at the national level whereby Governments free themselves from their international treaty obligations in less time than they took to negotiate them. That is due to the absence of internal supervision to monitor faithful compliance with such treaties.

One clear example of this relates to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and its final document, "Agenda 21". Developing countries attached great importance to Agenda 21, but there was no follow-up action to implement it. In fact, some countries had disengaged themselves to some extent from the international commitments they had entered into at that time. Proper parliamentary monitoring at the national levels should have compelled Governments to take such commitments more seriously.

Just a few months ago, we all attended the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. A Final Document and Plan of Action was adopted there, reflecting international commitments on the environment and on sustainable development. We hope that those commitments will not meet the same fate as the commitments made at Rio de Janeiro We urge all parliaments in the world to closely monitor action taken to implement the final document from Johannesburg, as well as the results from Monterrey's International Conference on Financing for Development and other related action programmes on the issue of development.

The Egyptian delegation would like to underscore the suffering of Palestinian parliamentarians due to the closure imposed by the Israeli occupation forces. They are unable to discharge their duties as representatives of their people. They are not able to move about to meet with their constituents or attend the sessions of their parliament. Israel's policy aims at destroying Palestinian civil and national institutions, contrary to claims Israel makes that it is the only democracy in the region. True democracies do not occupy other peoples' territories by force or usurp their rights.

Israel has ignored the fact that Palestinians have legislative and executive bodies that have been elected

under international monitoring. Egypt calls on parliamentarians throughout the world to urge their Governments to come to the support of Palestinian parliamentarians, who are suffering because of the destruction of their civil and legislative institutions. Such an elected Palestinian legislature would be able to guide its people towards peace, stability and development.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): We place great value on the subject currently under discussion, "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". Only through cooperation on matters of common interest can we realize the full potential and effectiveness of both the United Nations and regional and other organizations.

Let me express my delegation's continued satisfaction that we treat the topic of cooperation between the United Nations and other organizations as one agenda item. This gives us an opportunity to be more efficient and to have one debate. However, it also makes it difficult to comment on all the equally important sub-items on the agenda. This year I will, therefore, comment on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

With the required number of ratifications of the new Charter, the Organization of African Unity became the African Union at the Durban Summit last summer. The interim chairperson, Amara Essy, and the South African chair now have the formidable challenge of making the African Union into a well-functioning organization.

The renewed vitality and the modernized focus and mandate of the African Union shows the commitment Africa attaches to the challenges of the twenty-first century. This is further underlined by the aspirations embedded in the launching of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The importance of strong and practical cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union should be stressed. The role of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and other United Nations agencies in enhancing the capacity of the African Union Commission to respond to the objectives and targets set will be important. As the African Union has adopted a broad range of objectives and measures to attain political and economic integration, the capacity of the Commission will be crucial. Strengthened cooperation between United Nations and the African Union should further enhance the high ambitions for conflict prevention and resolution, good governance and democracy of the African nations, as envisaged in NEPAD and the African Union Charter.

Increased participation of the African Union in the United Nations, its organs and its specialized agencies should make a valuable contribution to the work of the United Nations. Norway is encouraged by the strong commitment of the Secretary-General to further enhance such cooperation. The combined efforts of the two organizations in conflict prevention and the peace processes on the African continent should be further developed.

The effects of numerous ongoing conflicts on the African continent only exacerbate poverty and underdevelopment, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, drought and hunger. The conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, the Sudan and Somalia are still unresolved and require the continued attention of joint United Nations and African Union efforts. The new NEPAD initiative envisages African leaders taking on the responsibility for peace and conflict prevention. The strong commitment of African leaders to peace, as evidenced recently in the Ivory Coast, makes the role of the United Nations a supportive one. The Durban Summit's strong emphasis on continued conflict prevention, management and resolution through the establishment of an African Security Council is encouraging. However, much remains to be done in order to have a fully operational set-up for this. Assistance from the United Nations and bilateral partners is still required. Norway will continue to support the mechanism and calls for United Nations technical assistance and a coordinated approach by non-African United Nations Member States to support the capacity of the African Union to handle African conflicts.

Cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the African Union is especially important in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping operations. Regional efforts by the African Union to achieve stronger economic and political integration could help prevent further conflicts. The new African Union has set a very ambitious agenda. The United Nations should play an

important role in assisting the African Union to realize those ambitious objectives.

Cooperation between field missions is an important aspect of the relationship between the OSCE and the United Nations. A well-functioning division of labour has been established in many areas of conflict and instability in the OSCE region, notably in Kosovo, where the OSCE has the responsibility for institution-building and democratization within the framework of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, cooperation in Central Asia is particularly important. The OSCE has offices in all five republics. A number of United Nations agencies, as well, have well-established programmes in those countries. We should therefore look for ways of enhancing coordination and identify areas where synergy can be achieved. Division of labour, based on the comparative advantages of the respective organizations, ensures that resources are used in a cost-effective way.

The OSCE will continue to be an essential partner for the United Nations in the years to come, working hand in hand with the United Nations in laying the foundation for economic and social development and easing the burden of the United Nations in conflict prevention and conflict management in the OSCE area.

Norway would like to emphasize the importance of strengthening parliamentary involvement in the important issues and processes taking place within the United Nations. Parliaments are at the core of every democracy over the world. It is the parliaments that decide whether international treaties or agreements should be ratified or not, and it is the parliaments that adopt or amend national laws to follow up those international instruments. And not to forget: it is the parliaments that make funds available — for development cooperation, for international organizations and processes and for the following-up of every new global initiative — through the budgets adopted in parliaments. Thus, it is only through cooperation involving the parliaments that the United Nations can fully succeed in reaching its goals and aspirations.

Therefore, Norway welcomes the Secretary-General's report (A/57/375), which clearly shows that the cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations has been developed even further since the last session of the General Assembly. The parliamentarians within the IPU have actively contributed their views and support in connection with a number of major United Nations events, such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the special session of the General Assembly on Children and the World Food Summit.

In the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Member States resolved "to strengthen further cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through their world organization, the Inter-Parliamentary Union." It is with great pleasure that Norway supports the adoption of the resolution of the General Assembly which invites the IPU to participate in the sessions and work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer, and which also allows for the circulation of official IPU documents in the Assembly. This is a decision long overdue. Nevertheless, we are convinced that this decision is an important milestone in providing the United Nations with a parliamentary dimension. On the basis of the new and strengthened status of IPU and the cooperation agreement of 1996, we would like to urge both organizations to review the cooperation so far and to consider ways and means to deepen and broaden the programme of cooperation in the time to come.

Mr. Gupta (India): My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/57/122) on cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

International law is an indispensable instrument to shape a new world order. International law cannot acquire the sanctity and universality that are fundamental to its wider acceptance without adequately accommodating and reflecting the needs and aspirations of the Asian and African States. Over the years, we have witnessed the able participation and representation of Asian and African States in the work of the United Nations and its legislative forums. Their contribution to the development of the law of treaties and the law of the sea is memorable, thanks largely to the work of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization as a forum for coordinating and trying to develop common Asian and African negotiating positions.

Member countries continue to receive valuable assistance from AALCO to help them to prepare for and participate in a variety of international law meetings on the environment, trade and human rights. A number of declarations and draft principles prepared by AALCO on subjects like refugees, humanitarian law, extradition, mutual judicial assistance, migration and investment are also worthy of note. Its continued emphasis on the work of the International Law Commission, the law of the sea, terrorism, human rights, international trade, the environment and the evolving body of international criminal law will be of immense help to Member States. In addition to its annual meetings and the customary annual meetings of the legal advisers of Member States in New York, it has also been conducting specialized seminars and workshops on contemporary themes of international law. These meetings bring together the best available talent of Asia and Africa in international law. There is a need to intensify these interactions.

AALCO has an indispensable role to play in helping the Asian and African States to develop enlightened legal policies and positions and to play their proper part in shaping a just and equitable world order. Towards that end, it must reorganize its mandates, gather the necessary funds and build its infrastructure. Asian and African States must ensure the development of international law expertise through the establishment of specialized institutions of legal learning. The wider dissemination of developments in international law in an easily accessible form to various segments of the community is also essential. There should be regular interaction between academic and governmental experts in international law within countries and throughout the regions.

AALCO can contribute immensely to that process with training programmes, the organization of highly specialized and high-quality lectures from leading exponents of international law, institutional fellowship programmes at the university level and exchanges of scholars and experts on international law within the two continents. We welcome the establishment of the AALCO Centre for Research and Training, which is an important step towards achieving those objectives. It is understood that some of these activities can be pursued only if more funds are available. The clearance of arrears in contributions, as well as fund-raising through voluntary contributions, could help.

It is heartening to note that the new permanent home of AALCO is beginning to take shape in New Delhi. We hope that by next year the headquarters building, along with the residential complex for the Secretary General, should be ready to be occupied. The acquisition of a new home will give a new dimension to AALCO and greater depth to all its activities. We hope that AALCO will attract a much wider membership and begin to better equip its member States to deal with contemporary problems of international law. We have no doubt that a vigorous drive to increase the membership of AALCO will be undertaken under the leadership of Nigeria.

The Organization has become a recognized body of international law in the international community, as it is the only intergovernmental body of its kind with observer status in the United Nations. We hope that the cooperation between AALCO and the United Nations will continue to grow stronger. We cherish our association as a member of AALCO, which has been serving us as a forum for cooperation in the field of international law. We are optimistic that in the coming years, the organization will play a greater role in helping to consolidate the common interests of Asian and African States and that it will achieve its objectives of training and of disseminating international law expertise among Asian and African States, thereby strengthening their role in evolving a fair, equitable and universal legal order.

Mr. Ahmad (Bangladesh): I should like to convey my felicitations to the President of the General Assembly for the very smooth progress of the work of the fifty-seventh session of the Assembly thus far. We are confident that, through the joint efforts of the President, his Bureau, the Secretariat and delegations, the session will achieve the success that is desired.

We are here today to discuss the important issue of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. As a multilateral international body, the United Nations has the unique distinction of being the largest and most representative of such bodies. Its vast scope of work, within the parameters set out by its Charter, is all-encompassing. In this work, the United Nations depends for direction, guidance and support on Member States and relies on its various organs for the implementation of decisions.

However, the very important role played in complementing those efforts by various international,

regional and other organizations which do not form part of the United Nations system may at times be overlooked. The draft resolutions under consideration today under the agenda item "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations" will definitely contribute significantly to overcoming such lapses. The need to strengthen cooperation between the various relevant international, regional and other organizations on the one hand and the United Nations and its organs and agencies on the other does not brook any debate. Such cooperation will help ensure the better coordination of the individual and cooperative efforts made by all those organizations and the United Nations in different fields.

I shall briefly say a few words about cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Bangladesh welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, contained in document A/57/375. The report gives an excellent account of actions and contributions of parliamentarians, through the IPU, with respect to ongoing international efforts in promoting peace and security, sustainable development and human rights. The 107th IPU Conference, held in March 2002, made important contributions towards charting a course for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The activities of the IPU, in collaboration with various United Nations bodies, at the special session of the General Assembly on Children, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the World Food Summit, the sessions of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and the annual parliamentary hearings at the United Nations are only a few examples of the very useful work being carried out by the IPU.

Parliamentarians play a crucial role in their respective countries by formulating government policies and by legislating, as well as by supervising the implementation of policies and the enforcement of laws. One cannot overemphasize the importance of the role of legislators. Through their actions, they determine the policies of their respective nations on the issues of safeguarding peace and security, ensuring sustainable development and promoting human rights and the rule of law, both nationally and worldwide. The aggregate effect of their national efforts contributes to the direction that the world takes in fulfilling the goals and objectives of the United Nations.

Therefore, it is highly important that parliamentarians and legislators from countries around the world have an effective forum for exchange of views on all the important issues of the day. The IPU has been satisfactorily catering for this need over the years. Cooperation between the United Nations system and the Inter-Parliamentary Union thus assumes special significance. It enables parliamentarians from different countries to have a first-hand insight into the workings and activities of the United Nations and its various organs and agencies. It gives them an opportunity to understand issues from a global perspective, thus affording them the chance to compare the international demands and the actual national responses to them through policies and legislation. On the other hand, such cooperation also enables the United Nations and its organs and agencies to understand and appreciate the unique local and national situations, hopes and aspirations that limit and shape the actions of parliamentarians and legislators.

The United Nations and other international organizations often work on the basis of global and universal norms and standards, arrived at through negotiations synthesizing differing opinions into a broad consensus. Application of these norms and standards in the field in different national and local situations often requires adjustment and fine tuning, taking into account the peculiarities of individual situations. The pragmatic and realistic adjustment of priorities and the variation in interpretation and assessment often prove to be the key to success. This dilemma — the gap between broad policies and their actual implementation in local conditions — can be seen over a broad spectrum of issues. Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU will go a long way in addressing this dilemma and reducing the gaps. We are happy that this cooperation has been further strengthened by granting the IPU observer status in the United Nations through yesterday's adoption by the Assembly of a resolution to that effect, resolution 57/32.

Bangladesh has a long tradition of pluralism and parliamentary democratic institutions. In spite of many pitfalls and occasional setbacks, the people of Bangladesh have always opted for a participatory form of democracy. We have a thriving Parliament, where legislators impose close supervision through parliamentary standing committees chaired by parliamentarians, not by members of the Cabinet.

Bangladeshi parliamentarians actively and regularly participate in the activities of the IPU. Members of Parliament from both the ruling and the opposition parties interact with their colleagues in other countries through regular exchange programmes. Bangladeshi parliamentarians have, on occasion, taken initiatives to organize their colleagues in the region for exchanges of views and to formulate common positions and programmes on various issues.

Bangladesh and its parliamentarians place particular importance on the ever-growing cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU. My delegation, therefore, has joined many others in sponsoring draft resolution A/57/L.38, on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU.

Mr. Fall (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Senegal is particularly pleased we in the Assembly are revisiting, without bias or complacency, the already rich cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union (AU) which should now be furthered and expanded upon.

In fulfilling the noble mission entrusted to it in the Charter, the Organization has, since the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV) in 1960, always had, happily, close and fruitful ties with a continent which, now more than ever before, is aware that the Organization is truly close to it — that it feels its heartbeat, that it records its impulses and, in a word, that it heeds its most legitimate concerns. In timely fashion, these concerns revolve around the challenges and stakes of the new age in which we live, hallmarked by globalization, a strong and irrepressible reality which was in the minds of our leaders when, on 9 July 2002 in Durban, the AU was christened at the baptismal font, after having been launched at the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit, in Lomé on 10 July 2000, one year after the famous Summit held at Sirte.

These leaders thus identified the new paths for Africa, which converge on three parameters: combating terrorism, strengthening peace and promoting development. To achieve those goals, the support of the United Nations is indispensable.

I will first touch upon the fight against terrorism. The tragic events of 11 September 2001 were regrettable and terrible proof of the scope of the damage that the cruel and vile beast we know as terrorism is capable of committing. Africa, which has already paid the cost of this scourge, in particular with the deadly attacks that took place a few months prior to that in Kenya and in Tanzania, early on took the measure of this serious threat by initiating bold decisions.

At the initiative of the head of State of Senegal, the African anti-terrorism summit adopted the Dakar Declaration Against Terrorism on 17 October 2001. That important step was followed by the holding in Algiers on 11 to 14 September 2002 of the All High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa, which established an African agenda aimed at countering this scourge on African soil, on the basis of the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, adopted at Algiers on 14 July 1999. Even more recently, other measures have been adopted to root out and eradicate elements and practices that constitute the backbone of terrorism. I should like to refer here to a few of the most significant examples.

In that connection, I would like to recall the 1994 Tunis Declaration on a Code of Conduct for Inter-African Relations; the 1996 Yaoundé Declaration and Plan of Action on Drug Control, Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking in Africa; the 1998 Dakar Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Transnational Crime and Corruption; and the 2000 Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons. These initiatives certainly reflect Africa's firm determination to play a more active role in the fight to eradicate terrorism. However, the success of those efforts depends on the active support and assistance of all partners and, in particular, of the United Nations, which has made peace its main priority.

I should now like to turn to the subject of strengthening peace. Senegal has always believed that recovery on the continent, and particularly economic recovery, will remain elusive so long as intra- and inter-State conflicts and tensions and their tragic human consequences persist. It is for that reason that my country is committed to participating as fully as possible by providing troops in the field and well-known Senegalese personalities to promote peace in such brotherly countries as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Sierra Leone and Madagascar. In the past we have made such contributions in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Burundi and Rwanda. We may soon be doing the same in Côte

d'Ivoire and, again, in Liberia, as soon as conditions allow.

In order to strengthen the African Union's Peace and Security Council's capacity to intervene, the United Nations, along with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Peer Review Mechanism, will be able to provide their assistance in facilitating the implementation of the African Council's early-warning system and the establishment of training programmes for military personnel and civilian police. They will also be able to extend consistent support to African countries actively involved in peacekeeping operations. In that connection, I would like to welcome the effective and positive presence of the United Nations in a number of African theatres of operation, as well as its fruitful cooperation with the African Union in the management of the conflicts tearing the continent apart.

In that regard, my delegation would like to welcome in particular the strong message sent by the Security Council to our development partners in order to mobilize the appropriate technical and financial aid to enable Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone to consolidate the gains made in establishing political and social normalcy in those two countries undergoing recovery.

With regard to nearby Liberia, we continue to await decisive support from the United Nations beyond the establishment of the International Contact Group on Liberia, which received its mandate on 17 September 2002 at a ministerial meeting held in New York, at the request of Senegal, current chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), whose Secretary-General was also present at that meeting. It is high time for a definitive ceasefire in Liberia, and for peace once and for all to be established in that devastated brotherly country. That would make possible the speedy deployment of an interposition force to that country, as well as the restoration of peace, security and development in Liberia.

The stability of the entire region depends upon that; a region where divisive elements have arisen in the sisterly Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the firm presidential statement of the Security Council — which reflects the particular attention the United Nations is giving to this matter — to send an African peacekeeping force to that country that has the trust of the parties and the valuable support of the United Nations and, in particular, of the Security Council. To that end, my delegation is hoping for a positive outcome of the negotiations that began at Lomé following the agreement on cessation of hostilities, concluded on 17 October under the auspices of Senegal.

I would also like to say how much we continue to appreciate the assistance of the United Nations, which has generously made considerable expertise available to Africa during the design phase preceding the establishment of the African Union's Peace and Security Council. My delegation hopes that this cooperation will be further strengthened once that new body is operational and prepared to assume its responsibilities in the areas of the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, in order to promote security on the continent, which is a sine qua non condition for economic and social development.

I would now like to turn to the subject of the promotion of African development. Drawing from the lessons learned during the repeated failures of the numerous programmes, strategies and other initiatives at African development that have often come from abroad, our leaders have finally resolved to design and adopt NEPAD in order to break once and for all the persistent chains of underdevelopment that have bound our peoples. Given its generous and collective spirit, this idea will make it possible for Africa to successfully become involved in today's globalized world and to participate actively in world trade through a considerable increase in direct foreign investment and a doubling of domestic investment.

In that connection, the delegation of Senegal welcomes the positive response of the United Nations. In his report entitled "Independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s", the Secretary-General identified NEPAD as the ideal framework for a partnership between Africa and the rest of the world. That partnership is one in which the Organization will play a leading coordinating role. Our search for synergy in this regard will be entrusted to an adviser with special functions in Africa, who is yet to be named. Provided with the necessary resources to carry out his mission appropriately, the adviser's role should not be confined to bureaucratic tasks. Instead, the adviser should increasingly have other responsibilities in order to be able to play a dynamic, practical and proactive role on behalf of NEPAD. Senegal remains convinced that in

that exercise, as well as in other matters, the United Nations will support regional efforts to optimize results in the field through improved coordination of efforts and greater consistency in the programmes and activities carried out locally through the various bodies of the Secretariat.

In closing, I would like to say that, as described by Secretary-General Kofi Annan — whom I congratulate for the relevance of his report — cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union seems to be alive and well. We believe, however, that on closer observation, we can see that the important potential for cooperation and the enormous opportunities that cooperation provides have not been sufficiently explored. The structure of the Secretariat has not yet fully integrated the new elements represented by NEPAD and the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

Given the commendable work of the United Nations Liaison Office with the Organization of African Unity and the African Union at Addis Ababa, whose dynamism we welcome, as well as the opening of subregional offices in Dakar, Nairobi and, soon, elsewhere in Africa, Senegal has no doubt whatever that the pursuit of United Nations reform will fully meet our expectations. On that hopeful note, I would like to reiterate Senegal's gratitude for the irreplaceable activities of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union and express the fervent desire that the United Nations and the African Union, together with those organizations, will work successfully to build a better world, a world in which the digital gap will be fully closed and the economy will be re-energized in a sustainable way, in which democracy and human rights will be solidly established, in which pandemics will be overcome and in which peace will be permanently established for the greater happiness of all people, even the most marginalized and vulnerable.

May the United Nations, the African Union and other organizations, in their daily common efforts to build peace, together forge an exemplary partnership for development. May they succeed in their efforts to cooperate.

Mr. Gross (Switzerland) *(spoke in French)*: It is an honour and pleasure for me to speak here as a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and as a Swiss parliamentarian, one of the initiators of the referendum on Switzerland's joining the United Nations.

I am grateful on two counts. I would like to thank the Swiss Government for allowing me to speak without asking me to express its position. If you don't agree with some of my comments, please speak to me directly. Also, I would like to tell you how grateful I am to the people and cantons of the Swiss Confederation. As you know, we were one of the last States to become a Member of the United Nations. We were also one of the first to join as an entire people. The Swiss people took the decision to join at the urging of one of the minorities involved in offsetting the negative result of the first vote of 1986. This was further proof of the old adage that the Swiss may be against a new idea, but that does not mean that they are against the idea, it just means they are not yet in favour of the new idea.

You must remember that even in your countries things happen in the same way. If you take many people on a train for a long and uncertain trip, it takes time to fill up the train. But all the effort spent preparing the voyage is compensated by the greater legitimacy, durability and knowledge gained by everyone who was involved.

This effort was worthwhile for the future of Switzerland as well as the United Nations, because living as a democracy means mobilizing the creativity, wealth and the intellectual potential of a people together in pursuit of a greater common cause.

Today we are confronted with the challenge and obligation to design a structure that recognizes the value of democracy above and beyond the nation State, because the nation State alone can no longer address the transnational existential challenges facing its people, nor ensure respect for their human rights and social needs. We must remember that democracy is much more than simply organizing a parliamentary majority and legitimizing power. It is a precondition for all those who are not privileged to be able to express themselves, so that freedom is not limited to the wealthy and the privileged.

Consequently, today we must globalize democracy in order to humanize globalization. The United Nations will be at the forefront of this common undertaking and every region of the world may contribute to this effort through its experiences. The Council of Europe, a pan-European organization of 44

European countries, including the less privileged countries in Europe, is an example of how parliamentarians, chosen by their national parliaments, can become the engine for ensuring that such transnational organization can work. This is, perhaps, an experience that the United Nations might build upon. Based upon this experience, I ask you to support the resolution for the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which shares this perspective.

Such a parliamentary foundation that would reflect the hopes, experiences, ideas and needs of peoples, may seem a little disturbing or difficult for Governments and diplomats. But it is certainly essential in order to enhance the legitimacy, effectiveness and the capacity of the United Nations to resolve the existential problems of peoples in the true interests of the world.

Another experience of the Council of Europe that is worth consideration by other regional, transnational and United Nations organizations, is the authority it has created to protect human rights effectively for the benefit of each individual citizen, including those injured by their State. There are also some problems faced by both the Council of Europe and the United Nations and which should be reformed collectively. In particular, I am thinking of how these bodies are financed. The practices of the European Union might be helpful in this respect. But I am also thinking of the weaknesses of these organizations with regard to the power of the world economy and the injustice it creates worldwide.

I would like to remind you of what Jacques Delors suggested to the United Nations, namely that it should establish an economic security council that would respond to the world financial crisis and the impoverishment of some peoples, much as our Security Council responds to threats to peace and security.

I know these ideas might seem utopian to some of you, but I would like to remind you that each of the successes that we are proud of today, for example the United Nations, at one point also seemed rather utopian. If we want our children and grandchildren to be happy and proud of their political achievements, we must today be open and bold in looking at innovative ideas.

If today you are not brave enough to imagine that which is supposedly impossible, we will not be able to achieve tomorrow the possible and the necessary. We must avoid a clash of civilizations, if we seek to promote understanding.

I thank you for being open and courageous, and I would like to thank you also for having been patient enough to have listened to what may have been a rather unusual speech.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): It gives me great pleasure to participate in this meeting of the General Assembly on agenda item 22, relating to cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. My delegation attaches great importance to this item, as it is one of the many ways through which the United Nations institutionalizes its cooperation with regional and other organizations. Such cooperation leads to better understanding and helps in strengthening the roles and effectiveness of the United Nations and these organizations.

Let me express the great satisfaction of my delegation with the decision taken yesterday by the General Assembly to grant observer status to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an organization that has been cooperating with the United Nations since 1947.

My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for the very comprehensive reports that he has submitted under this item. In our statement today, we would like to focus on United Nations cooperation with three organizations, namely the African Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), of all of which Mauritius is a member. In this respect, my delegation associates itself with the statements made by the delegation of South Africa, on behalf of the African Union, the delegation of Lebanon, on behalf of the OIF and the delegation of Angola on behalf of SADC.

We note with satisfaction that during the year under review, cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) — now the African Union — has been further strengthened in several areas and has involved almost all the agencies of the United Nations system. We have noted in particular the close collaboration between the two organizations in the areas of conflict prevention and defusing tension in many parts of Africa, among others in Madagascar and the Comoros, two countries belonging to the same region as Mauritius.

With the transformation of the OAU into the African Union, the pan-African organization is currently in a transition phase and is in particular need of expertise and assistance to establish new structures and a foundation for the building of strong institutional capacities. We are pleased that the United Nations Development Programme is contributing strategically to the elaboration of a coherent framework for this transition and we hope that such assistance will continue on a longer-term basis when the Preparatory Assistance Programme ends in January 2003.

The good relations between the United Nations and the OAU have always been characterized by fruitful cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The prevention and resolution of conflict in Africa has always been a priority for the OAU and will remain so for the African Union in the coming years. With the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, we hope that the assistance which was being provided to the Central Organ of the OAU will be maintained and further strengthened. As many members are aware, Africa has expressed its readiness to play a still greater role in conflict prevention and resolution by contributing African troops in the context of various conflict situations. These initiatives will require extensive support, and we invite the United Nations to help the African Union to build up its capacity in this regard.

In January this year, Mr. Amara Essy, Secretary-General of the OAU, participated in the public Security Council meeting on the situation in Africa, which led to the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. That was the first time that the Secretary-General of the OAU had been invited to brief the Security Council on the issue of conflict relating to Africa. My delegation firmly believes that there is merit in maintaining this practice in the future. The Ad Hoc Working Group has identified several ways in which the African Union and the United Nations system could cooperate in order to address African issues.

The ownership of development policies through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the economic programme of the African Union, bears testimony to the commitment and determination of Africa in addressing the political, economic and social, as well as the ecological, challenges of the continent. It is obvious, however, that the objectives of NEPAD cannot be realized without the assistance of international partners. The United Nations system could facilitate the process of building partnerships for Africa's development. We would like to reiterate that a United Nations system-wide coordinating framework will have to be developed to improve the effectiveness of United Nations support for NEPAD.

(*spoke in French*)

With regard to relations between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie, the report of the Secretary-General clearly indicates that, since the adoption of resolution 56/45, cooperation between the two entities has been further strengthened.

My delegation welcomes such cooperation between the United Nations and the OIF, which is based on complementarity and is mutually beneficial.

In the political domain, over and above OIF's contribution to conflict resolution in several African States, in particular Burundi and the Comoros, we welcome its decision to hold regular consultations and to exchange information and experiences in the field of preventive diplomacy and the restoration and consolidation of peace.

My delegation welcomes the OIF's contribution in the economic and social sphere, which has made it possible to include an Indian Ocean information management component in the Small Island Developing States Network. With a branch in Mauritius, that Network will now have a presence in the Indian Ocean, thereby facilitating a strengthening of information capacities in the service of sustainable development in such States.

We hope that cooperation between the United Nations and the OIF will be further pursued in other areas so as to promote sustained development in French-speaking countries.

(*spoke in English*)

Let me now turn to cooperation between the United Nations and SADC, a subregional organization to which Mauritius proudly belongs. Today, SADC is engaged not only in the consolidation and maintenance of democracy, peace and security, but also in efforts to promote sustainable development and regional

integration in a broad spectrum of economic and social areas.

A new wave of optimism is sweeping the SADC region, with real prospects for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola. SADC as a region has cooperated fully with the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping activities, particularly in peace processes in the Great Lakes region. The signing of the Pretoria and Luanda Agreements demonstrate the commitment and will of the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to turn the page and begin a new era of peace and reconstruction. We call on the United Nations to strengthen its presence and role in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and help in a thorough disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement programme so that peace can be durable and sustainable.

In Angola, the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement in April created unprecedented conditions for the resolution of all pending questions relating to the Lusaka Protocol and its full implementation after more than three decades of war and conflict. With the end of the war, however, Angola has to face great humanitarian challenges. It is therefore vital that the international community continue to assist Angola by providing humanitarian financial and material assistance in alleviating the suffering of the Angolan people and reintegrating UNITA in all spheres of activities in the country. The United Nations, together with SADC, should play an important coordinating role.

With the progress achieved in the peace processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola, the focus should now be on how to have an effective demobilization and reintegration programme for lasting peace in those two countries and in the region as a whole. My delegation favours a global approach to deal with the problem of demobilization and reintegration, and we believe that subregional organizations such as SADC can play a significant role in coordinating such programmes.

It is also encouraging to note that in its quest for peace and stability in the SADC region, there is close ongoing consultation between the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs and SADC to identify opportunities for further cooperation in addressing the problems of small arms and light weapons and the elimination of landmines.

The SADC community is determined to continue with its ultimate objective of building a region in which there will be a high degree of harmonization and rationalization. This will enable a pooling of resources aimed at achieving collective self-reliance in order to improve the living standards of the people of the region. SADC is also encouraging its member States to incorporate a gender perspective at various decision-making levels. Unfortunately, these efforts are being hampered by the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, as well as by the recent adverse weather conditions, which have taken a heavy toll on the food situation in a large number of SADC countries. While the Secretary-General's reports highlight the close cooperation which exists between the United Nations and SADC in addressing these issues, we appeal to the international community to increase its assistance to SADC members, especially those which are particularly affected by HIV/AIDS and the current food shortages.

In conclusion, the delegation of Mauritius fully supports the draft resolutions aimed at strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO). We are pleased to see the two organizations strengthening their relationship and expanding their areas of cooperation.

AALCO is the only intergovernmental legal consultative organization for the Asian and African region. Since its establishment, it has dedicated itself to the following areas: consultation and coordination on legal matters among member States; the latest developments in international law; and legal questions of common concern to Asian and African countries. It has achieved positive results. Over the years, AALCO has served as a forum of cooperation for countries of the region to work on legal issues and other matters of common concern. Moreover, it has contributed to the progressive development of international law and to its codification.

AALCO has become a regional body with unique influence in the legal field. We believe that that influence will continue to grow.

Since its accreditation as an observer in the General Assembly, AALCO has enjoyed ever-closer cooperation with the United Nations. Relevant United Nations agencies such as the International Law Commission (ILC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are regularly represented at AALCO's annual sessions, and their representatives regularly deliver important speeches.

Likewise, AALCO also attends a variety of meetings in the United Nations system and participates actively by making useful contributions. From the outset, it has given priority consideration to legal and other matters of concern to the United Nations. In this regard, its cooperation with the ILC stands out. Besides inviting ILC representatives to participate in its annual sessions and to speak of the work of the ILC, it has also made the report on the work of the ILC a regular item on its agenda, under which discussions are held and suggestions made. The Secretary General of AALCO also attends each session of the ILC and introduces the work of the organization. The cooperation between the two organizations is fruitful and satisfactory.

Last July, the forty-first annual session of AALCO was held in Abuja, Nigeria. During the session, detailed discussions were held on many important issues, including the work of the ILC, the establishment of the International Criminal Court, the campaign against corruption, the law of the sea, protection of the environment, human rights, refugees, and counter-terrorism. This has enabled the members to achieve mutual understanding and engage in cooperation on those issues.

China, a member of both the United Nations and AALCO, attaches great importance to AALCO and has actively participated in and strongly supported its work since becoming a fully fledged member in 1983. China is pleased to see the ever-closer and extensive cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO. We hope that the two organizations will further strengthen their cooperation in the promotion of the progressive development and codification of international law and other areas of common concern. This will set a good example of a close relationship and effective cooperation between a global international organization and a regional international one in their common quest for world peace and development. The Chinese Government will continue to contribute to the strengthening of AALCO's role and influence, as well as to the close cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. Santa Clara Gomes (Portugal): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Antonio Martins da Cruz, Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), who wished to address this plenary on the item "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe".

We view this debate, which is taking place shortly before the OSCE Ministerial Council, to be held in Porto on 6 and 7 December, as a very important political message that makes clear the importance that the United Nations attaches to the role and the contribution of the OSCE in the consolidation of peace and stability in its regional area of intervention.

The guiding objective of the tenure of the Portuguese chairmanship has been to ensure that the OSCE maintains its important role in the international arena, both in its vocational area of preventive diplomacy and in the new tasks resulting from the ever-changing international security context.

The prevention of, and the fight against, terrorism has been a central priority of our chairmanship, with the objective of promoting the valuable contribution of the OSCE, namely through the Bucharest Plan of Action and the Bishkek Programme of Action, in the context of the international strategy led by the United Nations.

It is in this context that we organized in Lisbon, on 12 June, the first Conference of Secretaries-General and High Representatives of the main international and regional organizations involved in the fight against terrorism. We hope to see a follow-up to this Conference next year, and we have already offered to host such a meeting in Portugal.

We have also been working towards the elaboration of an OSCE Charter for the Prevention and

the Fight against Terrorism. This political document, which we hope to see adopted at the Porto Ministerial meeting, will reaffirm the core, lasting and timeless values and norms guiding OSCE action.

Another concrete example of the OSCE's vitality will be the adoption in Porto of a decision containing clear guidelines for the elaboration of an OSCE strategy to address threats to security and stability in the twenty-first century. This strategy will not only allow the identification of a list of threats and challenges but also make it possible to elaborate a new operational approach for the OSCE to address such risks. We are all aware of the new difficulties and threats facing our individual and collective security, but no organization is capable of tackling them on its own. The reinforcement of the cooperation and coordination between all international and regional organizations has particular relevance in our globalized world where the concept of indivisible security is more palpable than ever to our citizens.

It is in this spirit that the Portuguese Chairmanship of the OSCE has been promoting the operational concept of the Platform for Cooperative Security, adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999, with a view to developing modalities of dialogue and collaboration between the OSCE and other international organizations, both at the headquarters level and on the ground.

As a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE has been able to develop, over the years, a very close and fruitful partnership with the United Nations in a number of key security related areas.

Conflict prevention appears at the forefront of the common efforts undertaken by both organizations. The prevention of conflicts is a core component of the OSCE's activities and a very important field within which to foster cooperation among international and regional organizations. We need indeed to promote a common culture of prevention, following up the dialogue on peace-building initiated by Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In this context, we welcome the initiative of the Regional European Union Conference on Conflict Prevention, which took place last August in Helsingborg and where Minister Martins da Cruz participated as OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

The OSCE's continued relevance is not only due to its broad membership, as the only political forum that is simultaneously Pan-European, Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asiatic, but also to its unique and comprehensive concept of security, based on three dimensions: human, political-military and economic-environmental. It is in the framework of these dimensions that the OSCE and the United Nations have been working together in concrete and pragmatic terms. Concerning the human dimension, the Portuguese Chairmanship would like to praise the active participation of a number of high-level representatives from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNDCCP) in the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting which took place in Warsaw last September. This meeting paved the way for the preparation of relevant documents for the Porto Ministerial Council Meeting on trafficking in human beings, tolerance and electoral standards. We would also like to underline the close cooperation and exchange of information between the OSCE and UNHCR regarding refugees and statelessness.

In the economic and environmental dimension, the Portuguese Chairmanship would like to thank UNESCO, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the United Nations Environment Programme for their valuable support during this year's OSCE Economic Forum, which took place in Prague in May, on the theme of cooperation for the sustainable use and the protection of the quality of water. We hope that the recommendations which were adopted will contribute to the efforts of the United Nations in making the 21st century one of "water peace".

In the political-military dimension, continued efforts have been undertaken by the OSCE in the field of small arms and light weapons. This is an important area of complementarity and synergy between the United Nations and the OSCE. We would are also considering the possibility this year for the OSCE to participate in or carry out peacekeeping operations. This needs to be pursued in close consultation with the United Nations.

Turning now to cooperation on the ground, we have witnessed, in different regions throughout this year, the continuous development of mutually reinforcing efforts between the United Nations and the OSCE. In South-Eastern Europe, this cooperation is

solid and provides concrete results. Throughout the region, the OSCE and the United Nations mutually support their daily activities in the field.

In Kosovo, where this cooperation is more evident at an a institutional level, both organizations work together in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). The OSCE has proven to be an essential part of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, where it has played a substantial role in preparing and organizing elections. The recent municipal poll is a good example of how the OSCE continues to consolidate stability in the province and to gradually hand over autonomy. The OSCE also remains committed in training a multi-ethnic police service, building democratic institutions and promoting human rights.

In Moldova, some important developments took place this year in the political process. Negotiations between the two parties and the three mediators resumed after a long period of inaction. The parties agreed to discuss a proposal presented by the mediators on the future political role of Trans-Dniester, in what represents a step ahead towards a solution to this conflict. On the fulfilment of the Istanbul commitments by the Russian Federation, some progress was achieved and we look forward to the completion of this process.

Regarding Belarus, the relationship of the OSCE with this country has been at the centre of discussions during the current year, especially through the role of the field mission in Minsk. The OSCE Chair has engaged in serious consultations with the Government of Belarus, with a view to solving the current deadlock as soon as possible, and discussions are currently under way in Vienna.

In Georgia, OSCE activities are particularly challenging. With regard to the South Ossetian negotiating process, the Portuguese Chairmanship hosted in Castelo Branco, last October, the eighth meeting of the experts group on political issues. The protocol that was signed represents a positive step in the resolution of this conflict in the Caucasus, ensuring the continuity of the momentum of the process.

Concerning Abkhazia, the OSCE Chair followed with the utmost attention the development of events and supported the efforts of the United Nations in the peace process.

Regarding Central Asia, the Portuguese Chairmanship praises the efforts undertaken by the OSCE and the United Nations to strengthen their cooperation. We would like in particular to emphasize the good collaboration between the OSCE Missions in Central Asia, particularly in Tajikistan, with certain United Nations agencies such as the UNDCCP in combating drug trafficking and the UNHCR in dealing with the increasing problem of refugees. I would also like to stress the excellent cooperation between the OSCE and the ECE, which have worked together under many projects of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia.

Let me conclude by reaffirming the conviction of the Portuguese Chairmanship of the OSCE that the current General Assembly debate will lead to the adoption of the annual resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE, which will be taking into account, where need be, the outcome of the Porto Ministerial Council Meeting. The Portuguese Permanent Mission intends to begin consultations and discussions on the draft resolutions during the coming week in New York. We count on the support of all delegations in this endeavour.

Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia): At the outset, I wish to join previous speakers in expressing my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for the preparation of the reports on the agenda item under consideration.

Mongolia attaches great importance to cooperation between the United Nations and other international organizations. The relevance of regional organizations in strengthening international peace and security, in conflict prevention and in promoting mutual understanding and cooperation and so on is undeniable, as such organizations are uniquely placed to deal with region-specific issues and problems by providing the necessary expertise to complement the expertise of the United Nations. The reports of the Secretary-General demonstrate that the United Nations continues to make considerable progress in deepening and expanding its relations with regional and other international organizations on a mutually beneficial basis.

Bearing in mind the time factor, and the fact that many delegations have already spoken at length on United Nations cooperation with other organizations, I shall focus on the Organization's cooperation with two organizations, namely, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

My delegation is pleased to note that the Secretary-General's report on cooperation between United Nations and the IPU (A/57/375) is broad-ranging and substantive. I share the view expressed by the Secretary-General that the parliamentary voice, which is the voice of the people, must be an integral component of the work of the United Nations. Although these two bodies have organizational and structural differences, the relevant report demonstrates that they are able to cooperate fruitfully. The Secretary-General's report deals with the contribution of parliaments to major United Nations events, including to multilateral negotiations, the special session of the General Assembly on children, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Human Rights and so on. It covers almost every area of United Nations activities.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU began as far back as 1947. That cooperation was further developed with the signing of the cooperation agreement, in 1996. The inclusion of the issue of cooperation between the two organizations as an item for consideration at General Assembly sessions since 2001 is a demonstration of the collaborative spirit of both the United Nations and the IPU.

As evidenced by the report, the two organizations share common goals, agendas and concerns, namely strengthening international peace and security, ensuring support for human rights, encouraging and supporting democratic changes, promoting sustainable development, reducing poverty and ensuring social progress. We concur with the view that parliaments and the IPU can serve as a bridge between the global and the local.

While addressing the question of cooperation, we need to focus on the comparative advantages of the two organizations and on a rational division of labour. The IPU could therefore serve to raise parliamentary awareness and to promote support for the work of the United Nations in national parliaments, thereby helping Governments. One other area of fruitful cooperation could be the conduct of genuinely democratic elections. Another important area lies in promoting democracy and strengthening human rights, representative democratic institutions and the rule of law. For example, the IPU has agreed to make its contribution to the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, which is scheduled to be held Mongolia in June of next year. The main theme of the conference will be to promote good governance and strengthen the role of civil society.

As the legislative bodies of States, parliaments can play an important role in strengthening international law, especially by promoting its progressive codification and speedily ratifying and universalizing basic international treaties — including those dealing with human rights, terrorism, arms control and environmental protection — and, equally important, by ensuring their full implementation.

We welcome the input of the IPU with regard to the successful holding of the Millennium Summit through the contribution of the first-ever Conference of Presiding Officers of National Parliaments. We also expect the IPU and national parliaments to be instrumental in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the agreed time frame.

Mongolia is proud to serve on the executive body of the IPU. Bearing in mind the constructive role that the IPU can play in promoting the goals of the United Nations, my delegation has joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/57/L.38, which is before the Assembly. We support the recommendation that the IPU be given both a standing invitation to observe the work of the United Nations and the right to circulate documents in the General Assembly.

Turning to AALCO, my delegation would like to express its satisfaction with the growing cooperation of that body with the United Nations since 1980. Through its programmes, AALCO is very effectively contributing to strengthening the role of the United Nations and its various organs, including the International Court of Justice. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization continues to orient its work programme towards priority areas of the United Nations, for which my delegation is grateful.

AALCO has left its imprint on the largest progressive codification process of the past century: the codification of the law of the sea. That fact will next month enable us to mark the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the Montego Bay Convention, which regulates almost two thirds of the Earth's surface. Since the Convention's entry into force, AALCO has been closely monitoring the work and functioning of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the International Seabed Authority.

In the 1990s, AALCO actively participated in the programmes of the United Nations Decade of International Law, in programmes on the environment and sustainable development and in helping delegations to prepare for negotiations on the establishment of the International Criminal Court. Bearing in mind that many States have still not yet ratified or acceded to the Rome Statute, my delegation believes that AALCO could play an important supporting role in the efforts to speed up ratification processes, perhaps by focusing on areas of possible concern to States and producing its well-known notes and comments. Likewise, it could be instrumental in promoting the objectives and principles set out in the Millennium Declaration by promoting wider acceptance of multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General.

Apart from the field of international law, my delegation would like to commend the fact that the AALCO is also active, among other things, in the fields of international economic cooperation, the fight against corruption, the environment, refugees, the protection of migrant workers and the promotion of human rights. We wish AALCO further success in promoting the goals of the United Nations. It is for that reason that Mongolia has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/57/L.18.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to express the hope that the United Nations will further deepen and expand its mutually beneficial cooperation with other international organizations. We hope that its cooperation with regional organizations will soon be expanded to include the Regional Forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, and that cooperation with international legal bodies will include the International Criminal Court.

Ms. Pulido Santana (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): This intervention in the debate will focus on agenda item 22 (h), on cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The delegation of Venezuela would like to express its satisfaction that the item on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU was included on the agendas of the Sixth Committee and the General Assembly, because of the great significance that our country attributes to the work of parliamentarians as representatives of the popular will and to their positive influence on international relations.

Venezuela's support for the work of parliamentarians is reaffirmed by the inclusion of members of our legislative body as members in Venezuelan delegations. On this occasion, we are pleased to highlight the presence of Venezuelan parliamentarians — including the President of the Andean Parliament, Deputy Jhannette Madriz Sotillo, and the Secretary-General of the Latin American Parliament, Deputy Rafael Correa Flores — to consider this item in plenary meeting. Our delegation believes that Venezuelan parliamentarians impart a special dynamic to the consideration of many of the items on the Assembly's agenda, which in turn enables us to focus on those multilateral issues in a more integral way.

In addition, I should like to highlight as relevant the fact that, of the five Associate Members of the IPU, three are parliamentary organizations belonging to the Latin American region: the Latin American Parliament, the Andean Parliament and the Central American Parliament. The participation of those organizations in the IPU attests to its importance for our region and to the contribution of regional and subregional parliamentarians to the fulfilment of its purposes, especially the attainment of international peace and stability.

In this era of change, both in the international system and in the United Nations, new actors must be involved in order to make development and the results of peace and international cooperation more effective. The valuable contributions that the IPU has made and continues to make in that area, particularly in fostering peace and democracy, are undeniable. In that regard, we thank the Secretary-General for submitting his report, contained in document A/57/375, in which he describes the broad cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations over the past year. The report highlights the contribution of the parliamentary dimension to United Nations activities, especially in conflict prevention.

Undoubtedly, parliamentary diplomacy has contributed and continues to contribute to the prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes, by virtue of the positive impact of the international measures, contacts and relations that, because of their flexible nature, can be carried out by Parliaments. Similarly, the compliance of States with the norms of international law is strengthened through the IPU's valuable support for the United Nations by ensuring, through national Parliaments, the conformity of

national legal decisions with the international legal framework.

By expressing the popular will, elected parliamentarians also echo the international will of their peoples. In addition, they promote the fulfilment of the rights and freedoms of peoples, contribute to the attainment of peace and stability, and provide monitoring and follow-up with regard to intergovernmental actions of interest to countries' foreign policies.

As we pointed out during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly and less than two months ago during the Sixth Committee debate on this item, Venezuela believes that the relations between the Organization and the IPU must be duly strengthened and formalized. Therefore, we are pleased to join the consensus on the adoption of the draft resolution in the Committee and in the General Assembly. In addition, we welcome the consensus reached on the distribution of official United Nations documents without financial implications for the Organization. We also support the draft resolution in the hope that it will be adopted by consensus in the Assembly.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): The debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations is always a special opportunity to explore synergies among international organizations, to share experiences and thus to strengthen practices that encourage greater understanding among peoples. In that regard, I should like to cite the example provided by cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), which, since its establishment more than 100 years ago, has promoted dialogue among parliaments of various nations.

The delegation of Brazil welcomes the decision by Member States to grant General Assembly observer status to the Union. That distinction recognizes not only the institution's unique nature, but also its historic activities to bring national Parliaments and the United Nations — which is the world Parliament — closer together. The entity's new status is also an effective stimulus for closer cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU, as expressed in resolution 54/12, which recognizes the potential of collaboration between the two bodies, and in the report of the Secretary-General on this item (A/57/375).

Cooperation of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs with the IPU can be brought about in two ways: through the Union's active participation in United Nations debates and through the dissemination of the international agenda at the domestic level. In that way, the parliamentary component of States will take an active part in debates on today's great issues. In addition, the Union's contribution will enhance understanding of the items on the United Nations agenda and will enable parliamentarians to assess the various aspects of the Organization's work. In Brazil's case, for many years now, parliamentarians have been involved in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and we are happy to see that, increasingly, debates in the General Assembly and those in our parliaments are in tune with one another.

The second way in which the Inter-Parliamentary Union can cooperate with the United Nations is with respect to the dissemination among our national parliaments of information on major issues on the international agenda. This promotes the communication of the outcome of deliberations in the General Assembly, and its implementation at the national level. Often, parliaments have the task of transforming United Nations decisions into national policies. In that context, I would like to welcome the decision of the 107th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Marrakech, Morocco, in March this year, which It stressed the importance of national parliaments in monitoring and implementing decisions taken by multilateral organizations.

Brazil expresses its support for efforts to strengthen cooperation between the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations, such as those proposed in the Secretary-General's report. I am confident that granting observer status to the Inter-Parliamentary Union will make the work of that organization even more productive and effective and will contribute overall to invigorating its pursuit of its objectives and of the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Laoteggueinodji (Chad) (*spoke in French*): My delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Congo. We trust that draft resolution A/57/L.25, on cooperation between ECCAS and the United Nations, will be adopted by consensus.

However, allow me to mention some aspects of international cooperation and regional cooperation that, in the view of my delegation, are very important. Given its geographical location, my country, Chad, is at the heart of African cultures and civilizations and is thus called upon to participate in cooperation at the international, regional and subregional levels. My delegation therefore truly appreciates the Secretary-General's initiative of holding a wide-ranging debate on cooperation between the United Nations and various regional-cooperation organizations. And it could not be otherwise, as the United Nations is the keystone of all cooperation among its Member States.

Cooperation is a major focus of my Government's policies. Stressing that political will, my country's authorities took the decision to make the Ministry for Foreign Affairs the ministry responsible for African cooperation policy. The result is the newly-named Ministry for Foreign Affairs and African Integration. This desire for cooperation has led our country to join many regional organizations, some of whose headquarters are located in Chad.

I welcome the fact that my country is a member of many of the organizations for cooperation mentioned in the Secretary-General's reports. My delegation therefore hopes that United Nations cooperation with the African Union will have a positive impact on other multisectoral organizations for economic integration, such as ECCAS, the Economic Community of West African States, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States and the Southern Africa Development Community. Those organizations are the pillars of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and must establish links of cooperation among themselves, with the assistance of the United Nations.

In short, we have to create horizontal ties of intra-African cooperation and vertical ties of cooperation between African regional organizations and those bringing together other developing countries, especially those in the Americas and Asia. Is not Africa present on those continents? Today, Africa is a like a broken vessel, and it needs the help of all its children past and present to tend its many wounds.

Today's debate is therefore very useful. It must also become more focused, targeting those areas of cooperation that are most promising and which can be mechanisms to help us combat poverty. Where exactly is poverty? It is very real in the countries of the southern hemisphere. That is why, while commending North-South cooperation, which must continue to be strengthened, my delegation believes that South-South cooperation must also be encouraged and further strengthened. There is a folk saying that two poor people do not make a rich person. But the two poor people can certainly think together about the conditions of their poverty and seek ways to escape it.

The structures of the economies of the countries of the South are comparable in many respects. Those countries possess experience and technology adapted to their development situation. In that context, my country notes with satisfaction that it is thanks to a country of the South, a member of Association of South-East Asian Nations, that we have been able to finalize our petroleum project, which is currently under construction.

It is a paradox that the countries of the South are poor, as they have an enormous reserve of raw materials and human resources to offer in their relationships of cooperation with countries of the North. Can countries of the South not do the same in their relations with other countries of the South? That is the question I ask.

Mr. Sriwidjaja (Indonesia): It is with pleasure that my delegation is participating in the current deliberations of the General Assembly on agenda item 22, "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". We have witnessed the intensification of the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations that began several years ago, and which has continued to develop. Better prospects have emerged for substantive progress towards solutions to many regional problems long considered to be intractable. In that context, fruitful cooperation has been established between the United Nations and regional organizations which have acted as partners in facilitating the peaceful resolution of numerous conflicts.

Regional organizations can play an increasingly active role in resolving disputes, as they have the greatest stake in their peaceful settlement. For geographical, historical and other reasons, they are uniquely placed to propose solutions to local conflicts. They understand their complexities and can mediate impartially. Their involvement can also lead to greater participation in the international system.

The partnership between the United Nations system and regional organizations should grow closer in the years to come, especially in the areas of working for peace, the rule of law, human rights, education, socio-economic development and the transfer of new information and communication technologies. We believe that further studies should be undertaken on the modalities for cooperation in these and other areas, within the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter and in the emerging context of inter-multilateralism.

Let me now turn my attention to some specific aspects of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Cambodia on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). In that regard, we express our support for the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN (A/57/L.16). It is our hope that it will be adopted by consensus.

Likewise, Indonesia attaches special importance to cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum. That importance is derived in part from our active participation in the Forum as a post-Forum dialogue partner. We fully support that cooperation, and we are pleased to be among the sponsors of the draft resolution on this matter (A/57/L.21).

As regards cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), we endorse the decision (resolution 57/32) taken on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee to accord observer status to the IPU. We are a sponsor of the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU (A/57/L.38). In our view, that decision marks an important landmark in the growing relationship between the United Nations and the IPU. It will facilitate the task of the two organizations to seek collective solutions to emerging problems facing the international community and to creating a better world for all of humankind on the basis of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

As far as cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) is concerned, our delegation is particularly encouraged by the momentum that has developed in building the global infrastructure for verification, which is an important component of the Treaty in ensuring compliance with its provisions prohibiting nuclear tests in the atmosphere, underground and under water. That regime is also expected to bring scientific and technical benefits to developing countries.

The level and pace of signatures and ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) epitomize the international community's strong support for the Treaty. Although the Treaty has not come into force since it was opened for signature six years ago, it is nonetheless heartening to witness the increasing number of ratifying countries, which now stands at 97. We realize the importance of continuing efforts towards the early ratification of the CTBT and of reaffirming the confidence of States in the Treaty, which is a major instrument for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. The 2001 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Treaty encouraged the Preparatory Commission and the Secretary-General to support mutual efforts to seek further adherence by the States concerned.

Aware both of our responsibility as a country listed in annex 2 of the Treaty and of the importance of sustained progress towards ratification, Indonesia will continue to make concerted efforts to expedite the process of ratification, which is still under way. Indonesia is among the countries that lack the technological wherewithal to monitor nuclear tests or to verify the Treaty's implementation. We have therefore placed our confidence in the integrity and reliability of the future CTBTO as a multilateral mechanism to ensure compliance with the Treaty's provisions. Indonesia also supports the initiative being coordinated by Mexico to convene the Third Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in 2003, so as to maintain the momentum in building the verification regime and to safeguard the objectives of the Treaty. We are hopeful that the Conference will include high-level attendance by States that have signed or ratified the Treaty.

We wish to encourage further outreach activities by the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission through diplomacy, as well as other endeavours to maintain and secure additional support in establishing a global verification regime.

We would also like to welcome the Joint Ministerial Statement in support of the CTBT that was adopted during this session of the General Assembly, on 14 September 2002, and that has been endorsed by

50 Foreign Ministers (*see A/57/586*). In our view, the content and spirit of that statement will add impetus to the international norm against nuclear testing, and thereby to the cause of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

Before I conclude my statement, let me express the hope that, pending the coming into force of the Treaty, the interaction between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission, as embodied in the agreement signed in 2000, will continue to grow. Such interaction and coordination can be sustained in areas of common interest and should develop fruitfully to the mutual benefit of both the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission. In that way, the Commission can profit from experience and insights derived from the United Nations. That, in turn, will contribute to the work of the Commission. Indonesia looks forward to the strengthening of cooperation between the two organizations, and to working jointly towards the common objective of achieving a comprehensive and verifiable ban on nuclear testing for all time and in all environments.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right to reply.

Mr. Shacham (Israel): I must, regrettably, ask the indulgence of the General Assembly in order to respond to comments made earlier this afternoon by the representative of Egypt.

It is unfortunate that in the discussion of an issue dear to us all — cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations — the delegation of Egypt found it necessary to voice an extraneous and irrelevant attack against my country. That behaviour is even more puzzling in the light of the fact that today, throughout Israel, ceremonies and events are being held to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the late Egyptian President Sadat's courageous visit to our country and the launching of negotiations that led to the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab State.

It is hard to think of an agenda item more dedicated to multilateralism than the item under consideration, which praises cooperation over divisiveness. Why, then, did it become imperative for the Egyptian speaker to single out Israel for a scathing, and even inaccurate, politically motivated sideswipe? That, unfortunately, is far from an uncommon occurrence. Time and again, in the plenary General Assembly and in the Assembly's various committees, Egyptian speakers have singled out Israel for attack and denigration in statements on universal agenda items that have nothing to do with the Middle East.

My delegation could have also taken the floor in order, perhaps, to call upon the world's parliamentarians to join together in protest over the lack of legislative power of the rubber-stamp Egyptian Parliament, or perhaps to protest the authoritarian regime in Egypt, which consistently violates the human rights of religious and ethnic minorities, homosexuals and women. But we chose not to do so.

Seeing the attitude of Egypt's representatives at the United Nations and that of its Government at home, the people of Israel ask themselves, "Where is the peace?" We were promised land for peace, so we withdrew from the entire Sinai peninsula. And yet, we received only hatred and animosity. We were promised land for peace, so we offered far-reaching withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. Yet, we received in return a ruthless campaign of terrorism that has left nearly 700 Israelis dead and thousands wounded.

While Israel appreciates the fact that peace officially exists between us, I ask my Egyptian colleagues to consider how this kind of behaviour influences the Israeli people, who nurture the hopes and promises of peace, yet see that in return for comprehensive concessions they get only rejection, hatred and violence.

Mr. Atta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): We are surprised at the comments of the representative of Israel. We merely cited irrefutable facts about the daily experiences of those living in the occupied territories. A policy of closures, imposed by the Israeli occupying forces, has been in force for the past two years. Furthermore, a travel ban is in operation every day that prevents Palestinian parliamentarians from moving about within the Palestinian territory. Israel's policy of destroying Palestinian civil institutions is another fact.

Finally, the representative of Israel referred to true democracy. A true democracy does not occupy the territory or usurp the rights of others, as Israel has been doing for half a century. The Israeli representative should be ashamed that the Israeli State is the only State in the twenty-first century that is engaged in military occupation of another people's territory.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

United Nations A/57/PV.55

General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

55th plenary meeting
Thursday, 21 November 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 22 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(a) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/122)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.18)

(b) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/87)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.11)

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/254)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.26)

(d) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.23)

(e) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/266 and A/57/266/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.25)

(f) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/119)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.22)

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/358)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.29)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

02-70344 (E)

(h) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.38)

(i) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/128)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.24)

(j) Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/386)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.32)

(k) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (A/57/576)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.31)

(l) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/217)

(m) Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351, A/57/351/Corr.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.39)

(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/267)

(o) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/405)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.28)

(p) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/475)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.21)

(q) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission (A/57/255)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.40)

(r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

Report of the Secretary-General(A/57/94, A/57/94/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.30)

(s) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations

Draft resolution (A/57/L.16)

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Bearing in mind the suggested time limit on statements, and notwithstanding the great importance of cooperation between the United Nations and each of the 19 entities we are considering under this agenda item, I shall on this occasion confine my comments to cooperation with the Organization of American States (OAS), with the Latin American Economic System (SELA), with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

I would like to express my delegation's satisfaction with the continued cooperation that exists between this Organization and the Organization of American States. The information provided by the Secretary-General in his report (document A/57/267) indicates that in Haiti the United Nations has continued to provide support for the OAS Special Mission for Strengthening Democracy in Haiti, and to participate in meetings of the Group of Friends. Similarly, in Guatemala, cooperation has continued between the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) and various representatives of the OAS.

The exchange of information between the two organizations concerning the general trend on the continent has also been substantial and has covered the recent crises in various countries of the region, including my own. We understand that existing dialogue and cooperation need to be strengthened and broadened. The OAS plays a vital role in the hemisphere in defending democracy and protecting human rights. Its knowledge of regional problems puts it in the best position to enable the United Nations to benefit by its experience and capacity on issues of common interest.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which has a very good reputation in the region, needs to achieve better coordination with the universal human rights treaty bodies. It is also desirable for that cooperation to be extended to the special rapporteurs of the United Nations Commission of Human Rights. Such coordination and harmonization of their respective activities, which is beginning to happen through the channel of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, will always redound to the benefit of strengthening the protection of human rights in the region.

Another propitious area for cooperation, in our view, is the economic and social sphere. The report notes the existence of various levels of exchange between the OAS and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the OAS and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Such cooperation could be expanded to other areas in order to unify the efforts of the various organizations to promote the attainment of the Millennium Goals on the continent, in particular in the areas of development and poverty eradication.

My country also values the diversification of the cooperation between the Latin American Economic System and the United Nations. We hope that these activities, and particularly those involving the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNCTAD, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) will be deepened and strengthened, which would also benefit the region's development.

The Argentine delegation welcomes the adoption by this General Assembly of resolution 57/32, which invites the Inter-Parliamentary Union to participate in the work of the General Assembly as an observer. We take the view that this historic event is a rightful recognition of the work done by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which aims at ensuring that parliamentarians the world over commit themselves to the activities of the international community in areas such as peace and security, human rights, economic and social development, democracy and gender issues.

We wish to express our profound satisfaction at the election of Senator Sergio Páez Verdugo of Chile as President of the Inter-Parliamentary Council. Argentina takes genuine pride in seeing Senator Páez conducting the work of the Union, and we wish him every success.

In the course of the past year, we have noted the growing cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Parliamentarians from all around the world have participated in parallel events during important United Nations meetings. Also, through the IPU, parliamentarians have shown greater interest in attending the general debate of the General Assembly and the deliberations of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. Here, the annual meetings between parliamentarians attending the general debate and senior United Nations officials have the dual purpose of heightening the awareness of parliamentarians on the questions under debate in the United Nations and establishing open and constructive dialogue with the Organization.

We also deem noteworthy the discussions that take place during IPU conferences on issues relating to peace and security, as well as to economic and social development. These debates have engendered a greater commitment by parliamentarians to forge legislation in keeping with the commitments undertaken by

Governments in the international arena. In order to support these efforts, a collection of handbooks for parliamentarians is being published jointly by the IPU and several United Nations agencies. We hope that the United Nations Secretariat will ensure more efficient cooperation in the preparation and publishing of these very useful tools for legislative action. At this point, I would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr. Anders B. Johnsson, for his tireless efforts to relaunch cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations. As a sponsor of draft resolution A/57/L.38, the Argentine Republic hopes that the General Assembly will adopt it by consensus.

Argentina wishes, above all, to reaffirm its firm commitment to disarmament and international security, which form an essential basis for building a peaceful and constructive relationship among nations and for promoting their development.

In this context, the role of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which it is the duty of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to implement, is of particular importance. However, it is a difficult task involving the destruction of immense arsenals, which will require substantial financial contributions. Moreover, the political will of the international community is required to achieve the vital objective of making the Convention universal.

The OPCW also has to ensure the fulfilment of another of the Convention's goals, namely, non-proliferation. In many instances, the task is to prevent widely available chemical substances that might be needed for the agricultural and industrial development of our countries from being manufactured and used for non-peaceful purposes. This task is especially important at a time when the international community is threatened by the phenomenon of terrorism, which has demonstrated its willingness to use any weapon of mass destruction to spread hatred and destruction.

Likewise, the Convention's preamble makes clear that advances in the field of chemistry should be used exclusively for the benefit of humankind. We therefore emphasize the importance of the organization's task and underline once more the importance of international cooperation in order to make available for developing countries the human and technological resources for activities in the field of chemistry whose purposes are not prohibited by the Convention.

One of the numerous important tasks imposed by the Chemical Weapons Convention is the need for the implementation of the Convention at the national level through the adoption of domestic legislation facilitating the monitoring and prosecution of violations of the Convention.

During the current year, the organization has suffered a crisis affecting its activities and threatening its future. Fortunately, with the cooperation of all States Parties to the Convention, we have managed to overcome that difficult situation and to restore the climate of harmony and cooperation that must reign among all members of the organization, as well as between members and the Technical Secretariat, in order to achieve the goals of the organization.

We are pleased that the States Parties to the Convention have entrusted a distinguished Argentine diplomat, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, with leading the Technical Secretariat in the new stage that we are beginning. We are confident that the new Director-General, who has demonstrated his personal and professional talents throughout his long career in the area of peace and security, will bring a renewed dynamism to the organization and will work to ensure that the Technical Secretariat carries out its activities in ongoing consultation and understanding with all member States. We wish the Director-General and all the personnel of the Technical Secretariat every success in their important task.

Let me conclude by expressing our hope that progress will continue in all areas of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction until the time when we can be certain that the threat to the maintenance of international peace and security caused by those terrible weapons of mass destruction has forever been overcome.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): My delegation is pleased to take the floor on agenda item 22 in the light of the increased necessity of intensifying cooperation and interaction between the United Nations and regional and other organizations in order to address the challenges facing the international community today.

We will limit our comments to a few areas of cooperation that are of interest to us. The Republic of Korea accords special attention to cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

(IPU). We believe that enhancing such a close, cooperative relationship will have a salutary impact on the future of the Organization. That is because the members of the IPU bring with them vast experience and expertise in promoting the globalization of democracy, human rights and economic and social development.

We are therefore pleased to note, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report (A/57/375), that this has been a productive year for cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations. Areas of fruitful cooperation have included the IPU's participation in the special session of the General Assembly on Children, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the follow-up to the World Food Summit.

While acknowledging the endeavours of the IPU in carrying out the work of the United Nations at the national level, through its legislative activities, there are still ample opportunities for the IPU and the United Nations to cultivate substantive relations by going beyond mere declarations. Hence, my delegation is pleased once again to be a sponsor the draft resolution on this item.

As a full dialogue partner of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Republic of Korea welcomes the inclusion of the sub-item on the General Assembly's agenda entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations", In our view, enhanced cooperation between the two bodies will contribute to promoting peace and stability and socio-economic development in the region. We hope that the formalization of the relationship between the two bodies, which already has a long history of development partnership, will be expanded in the years to come.

With respect to cooperation between the United Nations and Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), the two bodies have enjoyed a long, constructive relationship in promoting and developing international law. We take note with satisfaction of the contributions of AALCO, especially in serving as a major forum of cooperation on legal issues and as an essential organization for Asian and African countries in the development of international law. The Republic of Korea is thus honoured to host the forty-second session of AALCO in June 2003 and remains confident that this meeting will become a cornerstone in ensuring the vital role of this body in the coming years.

Let me now address the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). My delegation has always attached particular importance to the activities of the OPCW, and that body has become even more relevant considering the current climate of threats to international security, including potential acts of chemical terrorism.

Since the adoption of the agreement on relations between the United Nations and the OPCW in May 2001, progress has been accomplished in the area of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two bodies.

We are pleased to note that the OPCW has expressed its readiness to cooperate with the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee by providing information and assistance in line with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). As the threats of weapons of mass destruction grow, the OPCW deserves the unreserved support of its member States and the international community at large, to strengthen its verification regime.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to say a few words on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

During the past year, the shared interests and concerns of the United Nations and the OSCE have led to expanded cooperation in a number of important areas, including counter-terrorism, peacekeeping and peace-building initiatives, early warning and preventive diplomacy, refugees and promoting the rights of children. Having already acquired a solid record in those and other areas, the OSCE is uniquely placed to collaborate in close partnership with the United Nations.

As a partner for cooperation with the OSCE, the Republic of Korea is supportive of its activities and welcomes the specific efforts directed to improve consultation and cooperation between the respective headquarters of the two organizations.

Mr. Iwiński (Poland): I would like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for presenting his comprehensive report on cooperation between the

United Nations and the Council of Europe. The report highlights the progress made during the past year in the area of cooperation between two meaningful international organizations. This cooperation, although sometimes underestimated, constitutes an invaluable contribution to the promotion of peace, democracy and human rights on the European continent.

The Council of Europe is the oldest European integration organization. It emerged 53 years ago from the pre-war ideas and concepts of a unified Europe. It was also the first organization made up of democratic States which included during the 1990s almost all Central and Eastern European countries — among them Poland — giving them a sense of return to their own principles and values, as well as providing them with the means to implement and consolidate their political, legal and administrative reforms. After almost half a century, the Former Council of Western Europe has taken steps over the past decade towards changing its shape, its name and its mission. Thus, the Council of Europe plays a key role in ensuring respect for, and compliance with, human rights, on behalf of hundreds of millions of European citizens.

In an increasingly globalized world, cooperation between various international organizations, complementing cooperation among independent States, is urgent. In order to promote and implement the principles and values shared by their members, as well as to tackle the most important global issues — discussed recently at United Nations conferences held at such venues as Monterrey and Johannesburg — like-minded international institutions need to cooperate further within, and sometimes even beyond, their respective mandates. The dialogue and cooperation between the United Nations system and the Council of Europe can serve as an example of such an endeavour.

The Council of Europe shares with the United Nations long and outstanding experience in promoting peace, democracy, the rule of law and human rights, contributing to conflict prevention, confidence-building and long-term post-conflict peace-building in many countries. Both organizations are particularly involved in the Balkans, where United Nations Missions in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with the Council of Europe, collaborate to lend invaluable support in preparing legislation, providing judicial and legal training and developing the institutions of civil society and local governments.

The engagement of the United Nations and the Council of Europe has already contributed to the consolidation of stable local institutions, the introduction of democratic legislation and a reinforcement of the private sector, in order to prevent another terrible war from engulfing that part of Europe. Further development of close cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe is required in peace-building and the establishment of political stability in South-Eastern Europe. Such cooperation should include the training of human rights observers, human rights educational programmes and the promotion of dialogue among civilizations. Of course dialogue among civilizations refers to other continents, as well as Europe.

The wide range of activities of the Council of Europe gives it an opportunity to work in the field with various United Nations specialized organizations and programmes, such as the Offices of the United Nations High Commissioners for Human Rights and for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Environmental Program and the International Labour Organization, to name a few. While working together they can learn from one another and undertake new challenges, which concern almost all aspects of political and social life, including such important issues as the prevention of terrorism, transnational organized crime, corruption, money-laundering, trafficking in human beings, the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their countries of origin and racial discrimination.

The tragic events of 11 September taught us that in order to prevent threats to peace, security and prosperity, all global issues have to be resolved in a comprehensive and sustainable manner by joint action. The United Nations and the Council of Europe can play a role in these endeavours. As Chair of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I must stress the need for joint action in this context to resolve the worsening problem of refugees and illegal migrants.

Poland highly appreciates the role of the Council of Europe in promoting and implementing values and principles such as democracy and the rule of law. We are also in favour of further enhancing the close cooperation and coordination of work between the

Council for Europe and the United Nations family, encouraging further exchanges of views, experiences and expertise on many other subjects of common interest. Despite concentrating our current efforts on the final phase of accession negotiations with the European Union, we attach special importance to the activities of the Council of Europe, especially those which contribute to promoting peace, stability and democracy across the continent. We are of the opinion that the Council of Europe has contributed over all the decades of its existence to the practical implementation of the values embodied in the Charter of the United Nations in many parts of Europe. The Council of Europe is perhaps the only international institution which conceived and implemented a system of human rights protection, including the European Court of Human Rights, which is available to every person originating from a State party to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. This is just one example of how the values shared by the United Nations and the Council of Europe can be mutually defended and promoted.

Let me say in conclusion that I am convinced that the forthcoming meetings of the Council of Europe will provide an opportunity to further discuss the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. We should particularly focus on the new challenges of the 21st century. To face them in an effective way, we undoubtedly need new thoughts, projects and activities, together with new mechanisms for cooperation.

I would like to confirm my country's readiness, expressed a few months ago during the last visit by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to Warsaw, to organize the third Council of Europe Summit in Poland. The final modalities of this event would be discussed in May 2003 during the next session of the Committee of Ministers of the Council.

Finally, I would like to give my full support to the suggestion by the United Nations Secretary-General that he report more comprehensively on the cooperation between the two organizations on an every-other-year basis.

Mr. Malofeev (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The twenty-first century, the state of world affairs and the needs of United Nations Member States have challenged the Organization with more complex and massive tasks. The most important components of international development, including overcoming economic backwardness, poverty eradication, elimination of crime, measures to maintain peace and security, the protection of the environment and combating terrorism are constantly at the centre of attention at the United Nations.

The United Nations is increasing its influence in these and other areas through strengthening the Organization's potential by means of comprehensive reform. The Republic of Belarus is interested in enhancing and increasing the authority and influence of the United Nations, not only because our country is one of the founding Member States of the United Nations. In the United Nations, we see support for all countries, regardless of their size, economic and political power and geographical area. Within the United Nations, all countries can hold an equal dialogue and are not dependent on the passing moods of the major world Powers.

The United Nations is involved in the solution of the most current and acute international problems, as are international parliamentarians. National parliaments are in a good position to do a great deal of wise and productive work, to improve the lives of people throughout the world. It is no accident that the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly includes the subject of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. The United Nations is, therefore, one of the most important places for this discussion concerning the interrelationship between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

In expressing the position of the Belarus Parliament, I would like to say that the IPU is an authoritative and influential body bringing together 144 parliaments of the world. The leadership of the IPU is interested in developing fruitful relations with the United Nations and is doing everything possible to strengthen these contacts. Mr. Anders Johnsson, the Secretary General of the IPU, is making every effort to develop such cooperation.

Over the past few years, the IPU has adopted and implemented several resolutions, as well as other measures, to support the United Nations, a topic that arises frequently at major United Nations conferences and meetings of the Security Council. The Belarus delegation greatly appreciates the activities of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi

Annan, who greatly supports developing relations with the IPU.

The Millennium General Assembly, held at the United Nations in September 2000 with the participation of heads of State or Government, was an important milestone. The IPU conference of presidents of national parliaments was also important. The Declaration adopted at the Millennium Assembly stressed the need to establish closer relations between the United Nations and the IPU, and I well recall that time, since I was a participant in those forums and spoke from this very rostrum.

Since the Millennium Summit, a great deal has been accomplished. Today we can justifiably say that cooperation between two powerful organizations is progressing. This is clearly seen in the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the 57th session of the General Assembly, which provides a full picture of the interaction of the two organizations. Of great significance to the IPU are the annual meetings of parliamentarians at United Nations Headquarters in New York, as well as their participation in the meetings of the United Nations General Assembly as members of national delegations.

The day before yesterday we held our regular annual meeting. Such meetings give parliamentarians greater opportunities to communicate problems of common interest. IPU is pleased that it has been proposed for observer status in the meetings and work of the General Assembly. We also support the proposed resolution for the General Assembly on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU.

Today we cannot but touch upon the topic of terrorism. The brutality and the scale of the inhuman tragedy on 11 September 2001 shook the whole planet. The world has never before witnessed such a monstrous event. The taking, of nearly 1,000 hostages from two dozen countries in Moscow last month by Chechnyan fighters, again confirmed that international terrorism not only possesses a powerful financial basis, but is also very well equipped technically, well organized and also, unfortunately, finds support and financing for its inhuman actions in several States.

These two events are, unfortunately, links in the same chain. They have changed the world and have shown that no country is immune to possible attacks and terrorist acts. Today the world is one in its understanding of the need to combat the evil of international terrorism. In these circumstances, the role of the United Nations and the IPU significantly increases in combining the efforts of States to combat terrorism and we feel it is the United Nations which should be the centre for developing strategies and tactics for action by the international community to counter this evil.

In turn, the IPU can and must assume the function of coordinator of the activities of national parliaments to quickly bring all countries of the world to adhere to United Nations anti-terrorism conventions. We need to accelerate the finalization and adoption of a comprehensive convention on combating terrorism. My country considers itself an inseparable part of the international anti-terrorism coalition and, within international law, is making its contribution to this common cause.

This year we adopted a national law on combating terrorism and have included several other measures. However, we must all understand that the breeding ground for terrorism is backwardness, underdevelopment and a lack of basic living conditions for normal life for many people. These problems create social and political instability in many regions of the world.

I shall touch upon one other global problem which is of great concern. We need to recognize that the world environmental situation is seriously deteriorating. The main cause of this is a not always judicious, sometimes even dangerous production activities of man which can cause serious manmade disasters. Just such a disaster — the Chernobyl nuclear power station accident — had a profound impact upon the United Nations.

I would like to once again recall the tragic consequences of this accident. More than 70 per cent of the radioactive fallout fell on our territory. One in five inhabitants of Belarus, including more than half a million children, have been affected. Annually the State spends 15 per cent of its budget on eliminating the consequences of the accident. The Republic of Belarus is sincerely grateful to the many States of the world for their assistance which has been given in overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. International assistance, however, is not commensurate with the scale of the disaster at Chernobyl and the resultant losses being borne by Belarus. We welcome, therefore, the new strategy of

the Organization endorsed by the General Assembly on the socio-economic rehabilitation of the regions affected as a result of the Chernobyl accident.

I hope that through joint efforts at the State and parliamentary levels we will be able to find an effective solution to the pressing problems facing all of humankind.

Mr. Bergqvist (Sweden): Speaking on behalf of the Government of Sweden, let me first of all stress that I associate myself entirely with the message delivered by the presidency of the European Union.

As a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I will naturally focus on the relations between the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

The highest common denominator between the United Nations and the Council of Europe is the central role that human rights play in their activities. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights are both utterly central instruments for achieving humanism in the world.

The United Nations and the Council of Europe have always complemented each other. Following the end of the cold war, this complementarity has grown even more important. Today, one of the main undertakings of the Council of Europe is active support for the rule of law and the development of sound practices in new and re-established democracies. This also has global implications and is of great importance from a United Nations perspective.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, has often talked about the need to take intergovernmental policy decisions back to the citizens, who are the ones who will abide by these decisions and benefit from them. The Secretary-General has underlined the need for a two-way political discussion to make citizens understand and accept decisions which, to them, might seem to have been made far away and as a result of complicated international processes.

Here, the Council of Europe and other regional organizations can be of great use.

When the Council of Europe was created in 1949, it was a unique international organization insofar as it included a body with direct democratic links to the people: the Parliamentary Assembly. That institution was made up of elected members of national parliaments, that is, politicians who had a mandate from their voters and were responsible to them. True, the Inter-Parliamentary Union had had a similar set-up in the nineteenth century, but the Council of Europe combined this with the Committee of Ministers, which not only represents the member Governments, but is obliged to react, in the name of those Governments, to political impulses from the Parliamentary Assembly.

For many years, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has also served as a democratic anchor for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Once a year, parliamentary delegations from Korea, Japan, Canada and Mexico join the session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to discuss the development of the world economy and other OECD matters.

In the 1990s, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) formed its own Parliamentary Assembly. The OSCE complements the Council of Europe in an interesting way: both organizations deal with, inter alia, human rights and social, cultural and economic issues. The difference is that the OSCE does it from a broad perspective of security and the Council of Europe from a perspective of individual rights.

Consequently, within the framework of the cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, there are lots of opportunities to utilize the direct links between the members of the Parliamentary Assembly and their constituents for a direct political discussion on urgent international issues. Furthermore, with the creation of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities within the Council of Europe, an even more basic channel to the populations of Europe has been established.

This opens up interesting perspectives for political dialogue, especially since the core activities are so much in parallel. I am thinking of the meticulous everyday work that is done, which is not always spectacular, but has immense long-term importance in terms of conflict prevention. For instance, there is inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, and history schoolbooks are scrutinized to identify and change traditional but negative or xenophobic descriptions of the neighbouring world.

Let us make optimal use of our common resources to develop conflict-prevention strategies and

build up a more systematic conflict-prevention machinery. At the recent European Union regional meeting on conflict prevention, held in Sweden in August, both the Council of Europe and the United Nations were able to share valuable experiences of practical cooperation in this field.

There is an interesting offspring of the Council of Europe called the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity, or simply the North-South Centre. As can be deduced from its name, the Centre's goal is to serve as a bridge to other cultures. In addition, it is currently working hard to follow up the Johannesburg meeting in the field of education for sustainable development, where it has made great efforts in supporting the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The Council of Europe is proud of the fact that it has managed to create an area free of capital punishment under all circumstances. This is manifested in the 13th Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, which a majority of member States have now also signed.

Following the tragic events of 11 September last year, it was only natural for the Council of Europe to make every possible contribution to the fight against terrorism. That political preparedness resulted, among other things, in a set of guidelines for the important work of combating terrorism while preserving democracy and human rights.

It is of crucial importance that States do not deviate from their democratic standards of openness, responsibility and legal predictability just because they are dealing with evil terrorists. If we are not steadfast in that respect we may soon find ourselves on a very slippery slope towards lower standards in the field of democracy and human rights. In that context, it is also to be hoped that the International Criminal Court will eventually be universally recognized and that its Statute will not be diluted or set aside by bilateral agreements.

We must all do our best to ensure that the high standards of the United Nations — which are also the standards of the Council of Europe — will prevail in the future. Together and in increasingly close partnership, we must build further on that platform.

Mr. Musambachime (Zambia): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report contained in documents A/57/94 and A/57/94/Add.1, in which he provides an update to his previous reports contained in documents A/56/134 and A/56/134/Add.1, on programmes and activities undertaken by Member States and bodies of the United Nations in cooperation with the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

My delegation also wishes to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Angola on behalf of SADC and by the representative of the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the African Union, in which they urged support for the draft resolutions they introduced, draft resolutions A/57/L.30 — on cooperation with SADC — and A/57/39 — on cooperation with the African Union — respectively.

My Government recognizes the importance of regional integration as a fundamental tool to foster social and economic development. Given the small size of our individual economies, which are unable to achieve economies of scale in the production and marketing of products, there is a need to work together as a region in order to achieve significant levels of economic growth and to compete in a world that is becoming increasingly dominated by large trading blocs. Trade liberalization and regional integration will therefore promote greater growth through improved resource allocation, greater competition, technology transfers and improved access to foreign capital.

It is in that regard that my delegation firmly supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which provides a comprehensive and integrated development plan that addresses key social, economic and political issues on the continent. The international community should support the commitment of our leaders in Africa to the people by assisting Africa to embark on a path of sustainable growth. That can be achieved through the continent's accelerated integration into the global economy.

We welcome the support the NEPAD initiative has received at major conferences, in particular at the Group of Eight Summit held in Kananaskis, Canada. We also applaud the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly that was held on 16 September 2002 and devoted to a discussion of the NEPAD issue. We welcome resolution 57/2, which was adopted by the General Assembly at that meeting, and hope that it will be fully implemented. That support is a clear

manifestation of the commitment of the international community to address the problems of the region, and those of the continent as a whole.

With regard to the report of the Secretary-General, we note with appreciation the role of the United Nations and the international community in support of efforts by SADC to promote sustainable development and regional integration in a broad spectrum of economic and social areas. We also note with great satisfaction the efforts of the United Nations and Member States to initiate and strengthen cooperation with SADC and its member States in the areas of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building. Those efforts have heightened the prospects for peace in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

However, I wish to highlight two areas of grave concern to our region, namely, the humanitarian crisis affecting the SADC region and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

For the third consecutive year, Southern Africa has been affected by natural disasters. This year, drought has affected Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe, causing severe food shortages. According to available information, 14.5 million people are affected. That combination of calamities comes at a time when the extent of the humanitarian crisis in the region is becoming clear. It is estimated that there will be a total regional shortfall of 4 million tons of food over the next year, of which 1.2 million tons will be met by emergency food aid.

With respect to my country, Zambia, this is the second year that we are experiencing severe drought. It is estimated that 2.3 million people need emergency food assistance. That unfortunate situation has further been exacerbated by the high prevalence of AIDS, which affects the most productive age group — that in the range of 15 to 49 years of age.

Furthermore, poor communities have become more vulnerable to natural disasters and erratic weather. In addition, other factors faced by the region — such as economic decline, dwindling commodity prices and limited access to Western markets — are constraining development.

Against that background, my delegation wishes to appeal to the international community for food aid to solve the immediate food shortages and to prevent a severe catastrophe. We further appeal to the donor community to take an integrated approach to the problem, as this is not just a question of famine but also one that involves a wider public health issue as regards water and sanitation. In the long run it would also be advisable for the donor community to engage and strengthen regional mechanisms within SADC to address this crisis.

Finally, we wish to express our support for the views of other delegations that have called on the Secretary-General to continue to intensify contacts aimed at promoting and harmonizing cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community. The challenges facing our Community are grave, but they are not insurmountable. We believe that the United Nations is best placed to mobilize the necessary resources from the international community that will effectively address the problems we are confronting in the region. My delegation appeals for support for the draft resolutions before us.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to align myself with previous speakers in expressing my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for the preparation of the reports on the agenda item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". Given the time factor, I would like to focus on sub-items 22 (b), (d), (l), (n) and (o).

The Republic of Azerbaijan attaches great importance to cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. These organizations are an integral part of a globalizing world that needs consolidated and coordinated efforts at the regional level aimed at combating such threats and challenges as military conflicts, terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime, arms smuggling, illegal migration, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, natural disasters, poverty and social and economic degradation.

During the last decade the significance of the Council of Europe has grown. This organization plays an outstanding role in instituting European integration and leading the process towards the formation of a common legal framework through the unification of national legislation on the basis of European conventional norms, strengthening democratic institutions and developing cultural identity in Europe.

The enlargement of the Council of Europe created an opportunity for the new Eastern European democracies to participate closely in European life and to quickly develop the conditions needed to meet the socio-political and juridical requirements for admission to the European Union. We underline the valuable contribution of the Council to democratic stability in Europe and welcome the fact that the activities of that organization are increasingly being referred to by others beyond the region of its responsibility. The Council's experience deserves close attention by the United Nations.

In today's world the importance of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) as a structure that brings together States on the basis of common cultural, historical and religious traditions and values is growing. In the context of new challenges, that organization plays a significant role as an influential participant in the dialogue aimed at strengthening confidence between civilizations. Having gained since its very inception a solid international reputation and influence, particularly in the vast area from North Africa to South-Eastern Asia, where numerous "hot spots" exist, the OIC has demonstrated its true interest in ensuring international peace and security and has consolidated the efforts of Islamic States to combat current challenges and risks.

With a profound perception from within of the problems of the Orient and their complex character, the OIC would expect that the international community would be more attentive to its opinion with regard to the achievement of stability and accord in regions with predominant Muslim populations. Constructive dialogue and cooperation with the OIC could contribute to the solution of many complex issues, including the settlement of armed conflicts and suppression of sources of international terrorism.

It is noteworthy that a large number of OIC countries have vast natural resources and great potential for development. Effective utilization of these resources would benefit those countries and would secure interests throughout the world, as a result of a comprehensively balanced relationship with the Orient.

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) has developed from a cooperation initiative in the Black Sea region into a European organization, with a broad range of sub-entities. This process has gained pace during the last three years.

Cooperation among States with different values, levels of economic development, natural resources and productive forces sets the ground for a deepening of mutual dialogue and for exploration of common ways to develop economic cooperation in the region. Priority directions of the organization have already been determined and include mainly the energy and transport sectors. Azerbaijan contributes actively to the BSEC, and in a wider context, to Europe in the development of these important sectors.

Being actively engaged in the expansion of its relations with the outside world, Azerbaijan places great significance on the further development of mutual advantageous cooperation with members of the Organization of American States (OAS). In 2001, Azerbaijan was granted the status of a permanent observer at that organization. Our country will do its utmost to contribute positively to cooperation between the United Nations and the OAS.

Continuing our discussion of the significance of regional organizations in global development, we see the OSCE as the only European structure that brings together all countries of the region. The historical merit of that organization, which took upon itself the responsibility for building a pan-European home on the basis of common principles of security and cooperation, is in its important role in sustaining peace in the era of the bloc confrontation, in the democratic transformation of Eastern European societies at the end of last century, as well as in establishing prerequisites for the integration process throughout the European continent. Owing to the activities of OSCE, there has been rapprochement among European States, and standards of conduct and the main spheres of cooperation were established.

Meanwhile, during the last decade, the effectiveness of the OSCE to countering dangerous new challenges was seriously tested. We believe that the OSCE has to enhance its contribution to the settlement of conflicts primarily in the area of its responsibility.

In this context, allow me to touch upon the peaceful settlement of Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. Mediation by the Minsk Group should be impartial, just and aimed at the unconditional implementation of

decisions of the OSCE and the United Nations Security Council with regard to the withdrawal of Armenian occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the complete elimination of the consequences of the armed conflict, with a settlement based on strict compliance with the principles set forth in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975.

Departure from these principles and decisions or consideration of proposals by mediators based on the acceptance of fait accompli put the rule of law and the effectiveness of international mediation under serious doubt, undermine confidence in the OSCE Minsk Group and negatively impact the prestige of the OSCE, which plays a lead role in the resolution of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, as rightly mentioned in the Secretary General's report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE", document A/57/217. We maintain, however, that given the protracted lack of progress in the negotiations and the "conciliation" efforts by the mediators with regard to the results of the Armenian aggression, there is a need for decisive intervention by the Security Council, which has not exhausted all its opportunities for exerting influence to achieve a breakthrough in the negotiations.

For our part, my country has very recently put forward a package of proposals on the partial elimination of the consequences of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and the establishment of cooperation. Backed by the international organizations concerned, the package implies the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from four occupied districts of Azerbaijan and the restoration of the main railroad line passing through those territories and linking Azerbaijan, Armenia and other countries of the region. However, our proposals, the realization of which could have been an important confidence-building step towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict and regional cooperation, were rejected by Armenia.

Let me conclude by emphasizing that enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations will lead to the increased practical and operational effectiveness and efficiency of the organizations involved. Our delegation is also convinced that the United Nations can only benefit from close cooperation with those organizations.

Mr. Salman (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to express our appreciation for the fact that cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations has become a separate item on our agenda, which will undoubtedly give added impetus to the working methods of the General Assembly and improve its efficiency. In addition, my delegation commends the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/57/375, which details the levels of cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and their activities in the fields of peace, security, economic and social development, international law, human rights and democracy. We believe that the IPU has an immense wealth of knowledge and experience from which the Organization can greatly benefit.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union represents the voices of the people. Accordingly, it must be a significant component of the work of the United Nations and should play an important role in the strengthening of multilateral diplomacy. That will be possible only if our legislative bodies have a greater part in decision-making processes to enhance international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations. Parliaments are an expression of the voices of the people, and thus, their participation guarantees the democratic nature of such decision-making processes.

An important aspect to note in that regard is the IPU's ability to make a positive contribution to the current debate on reform of the United Nations, especially that of the Security Council and of the General Assembly. Council resolutions should be just and democratic and should allow those affected by such resolutions to take them before the International Court of Justice so that the Court can decide whether or not they conform to the Charter of the United Nations. That would prevent one or more countries from pressuring the Security Council to adopt resolutions of ill political intent without giving those affected the right to any legal recourse to ascertain the legality of such resolutions, just as citizens have the right to question the constitutionality of laws adopted by legislative bodies and high tribunals.

Relations and cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU conform to the provisions of the Charter, which encourages and determines partnerships among regional organizations, especially with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. As my delegation has noted, the IPU should actively participate in any important agenda items that have

international implications. Such a partnership is essential under the current circumstances and challenges now faced by the international community, because it can improve the transparency of the Organization's work and its accountability to international public opinion.

In order to halt the anarchy that is spreading through international relations as a result of the increasing tendency to infringe upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and to interfere in their internal affairs — contrary to the principles of the Charter — and to stop the United Nations from losing the respect of the world's peoples and from being consumed by selfish interests, we call on the IPU to join other organizations of goodwill in their efforts to save the Organization and to confront the policies of hegemony, tyranny and destabilization of States and the inflaming of ethnic divisions.

What is happening in Iraq as a result of the embargo that the United States insists on maintaining without any moral or legal support is clearly a case of tyranny and injustice. Indeed, it constitutes genocide that not even United Nations personnel could tolerate. Genocide is a crime under the Charter and international law, yet it is occurring there. Every day, the children, women and elderly people of Iraq are dying. What is happening in the Security Council with regard to the Iraqi question is yet another example of flagrant violation of the Charter and of international law.

The people of Iraq, the Arab people, the Muslims and all the free peoples of the world call for democracy, respect for justice, the application of international legitimacy and respect for the Charter and for international law in word and in deed. To that end, the IPU can make a positive contribution. It is our hope that the debate on this item will strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU. Will our meeting succeed in bringing that about? We sincerely hope that it will.

Mr. Davis (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor to address this important agenda item. I should like to begin by thanking the distinguished representative of Denmark, who spoke earlier in the debate on behalf of the member States of the European Union, and to take this opportunity to put on record that the delegation of the United Kingdom fully endorses their statement.

As we did last year, we have gladly supported the Secretary-General's recommendation that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) be granted observer status here at the United Nations. And the British Group of the IPU has also asked me to pass on its full support. I welcome this recognition of the valuable role that the IPU plays worldwide in fostering peace and security through dialogue, in promoting democracy and respect for human rights, and in contributing to the development of representative and effective legislative institutions.

The IPU already does a great deal of excellent work in support of the objectives of the United Nations. In recent months, it has also provided parliamentary forums on the occasions of the fifty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the General Assembly special session on children, the World Food Summit: five years later and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. And, of course, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is also much involved in the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

That is one reason why, as a member of the United Kingdom delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly and leader of the Socialist Group — the largest political group in the Assembly — I also welcome and support the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, with its total membership of 44 countries, following the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the past year, and our close relationship with Canada, Mexico and several other members of the United Nations from other continents.

The Council of Europe and the United Nations emerged at a similar point in history. Both shared a common goal: to put an end to the scourge of war. The statesmen who struggled to make the Council of Europe a reality took heart from the foundation of the United Nations. More than 50 years have passed, and today the Council of Europe continues to regard the United Nations as a source of inspiration and practical expertise in achieving our common goals. The two organizations are mutually reinforcing. The Council of Europe looks to the United Nations to take a lead on global conflict prevention and human rights issues. In return, it serves to underpin and advance the universal goals and values of the United Nations throughout the European continent.

Tragically, despite the efforts of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and others, war and conflict remain a global scourge that destroys the lives and hopes of millions. Europe has not been immune. The end of the cold war brought most of Central and Eastern Europe into the Council of Europe, but this development was preceded by violent conflicts that saw human rights abuses on a massive scale in the South Caucasus and South-East Europe. No one would claim that the United Nations has got everything right in South-East Europe. But it has played a vital role in stabilizing the region and in bringing to justice those responsible for serious war crimes and some of the worst abuses of human rights.

The Council of Europe has worked alongside the United Nations to assist its post-conflict peace-building efforts. At the request of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe once again mounted an election observation mission in Kosovo for this year's local government elections. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council of Europe is supporting the work of the Office of the High Representative by extensive training of the judiciary. And the Council of Europe is involved in the promotion of human rights and democratic institutions, economic development and the fight against corruption across the whole of South-East Europe, especially through our contribution to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

But cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe goes far beyond the borders of South-East Europe. It is about the mutual reinforcement of a common set of values and goals. It is about respect for human rights; the prevention of torture; the fight against discrimination, racism and xenophobia; and the campaign for equal treatment and equal opportunities for men and women. It is about securing a better future, based on universally held rights and values. The points of interaction are too numerous to catalogue in full, so I shall mention just a few.

As the report of the United Nations Secretary-General shows, the last year has been notable for increased cooperation between the Council of Europe, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Of course, the Council of Europe's greatest contribution to human rights and peace is its legal instruments. And when we are engaged in the promotion of the European Convention on Human Rights, we are, at the same time, promoting respect for the rights set out in the Universal Declaration. Our Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities is a legally binding instrument based on principles established in a United Nations text.

Similarly, the Council of Europe has been a tireless advocate of the International Criminal Court. More than 30 of our member States have ratified the Rome Statute, which is now in force. The Council of Europe pledges to continue working with its member States in helping the implementation of the Statute.

We also applaud the plan to adopt a draft optional protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, which is one of the most important activities of the Council of Europe, looks forward to working with the United Nations subcommittee that we set up as a result of the adoption of the protocol. The Council of Europe, through another of its important activities, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, has also been active in the implementation of the conclusions of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

We have a joint mission with the United Nations and the rest of the international community. This mission is to defeat the forces of hatred and fanaticism, which are the antithesis of human rights, and which can lead, as we have seen, to indiscriminate terrorism. The United Nations has taken a leading role in the international response to the events of 11 September. The Council of Europe's main contribution has been to strengthen legal cooperation in the fight against terrorism. At the same time, we stand firm in our opposition to the death penalty in these and all other circumstances.

Nor has the Council of Europe confined its concerns to Europe. We take an active interest in developments in and among our neighbours to the East, in the Middle East and in North Africa, and, through the work of our North-South Centre in Lisbon, in the rest of the world as well.

I am confident that in the coming months and years, the Council of Europe will continue to work alongside the United Nations on the challenges before us. The Council of Europe's work is the work of the

United Nations. Our values are the values of the United Nations. Our goals are the goals of the United Nations. In the Council of Europe, we will continue to look to the United Nations for support and inspiration. And we hope that we can give the same in return.

Mr. Toscano-Amores (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The creation of the Latin American Economic System on 17 October 1975 took place in an international environment dominated by bipolar confrontation, in the midst of which Latin America and the Caribbean sought to equip themselves with a truly regional organization under the exclusive control and management of the countries of the region.

In order to ensure for themselves active participation and an international presence, Latin America and the Caribbean vitally needed to assert their own identity and personality and to undertake an independent critical analysis. It also needed to set up a permanent system of economic cooperation, interacting with international agencies, third countries or regional groups of countries, and to establish a guiding body in the joint negotiations that might potentially involve Latin America and the Caribbean.

As it came into being, the Latin American Economic System set up to create such a space in the region, because the international economic landscape had proved to be adverse to the needs of our countries. The international economic relations that developed following the Second World War, marked by the imbalances and inequities repeatedly alluded to by developing countries in this and other forums, underwent changes during the 1980s and 1990s. Regrettably, those changes did not mean correcting those imbalances; rather, they consolidated them in a pattern of economic and political blocs in which the decision-making capacity was concentrated in a few countries.

All of this indicates the grave obstacles that the countries of the Latin American region face in overcoming poverty and underdevelopment. The conditionality implicit in stabilization policies and structural adjustment programmes tends to weaken the structures of the States concerned, while economic and trading openness is pursued in an international market riddled with protectionist barriers imposed by the developed countries.

These conditionalities and structural adjustments imposed by the international financial agencies have begun to have a harmful impact on our socio-political structures. Regional democratic systems have had and continue to face profound and intractable economic crises while social discontent has grown. As these attempts fail, the very democratic governance of the region totters dangerously; such deterioration cannot continue indefinitely, because there is a genuine danger of collapse.

We must therefore ask ourselves what course to take in addressing these challenges. There is no easy answer because, unfortunately, it depends not only on countries' striving to find the path to development, but also on the support offered by the developed countries possessing financial and technological resources.

Against this backdrop, SELA's validity is all the more necessary, as is its interaction with other multilateral forums for debate and concertation, especially the United Nations. As has been said, one of SELA's objectives is to promote a system of consultation and coordination in order to develop common regional positions and strategies vis-à-vis other countries, forums and international agencies, as well as to promote Latin American integration. In this regard, cooperation with the United Nations system is also essential, since it encompasses multilateral agencies with convergent and complementary objectives at the regional and global levels.

One feature of the current world order is the lack of alternative academic and political debate. In this respect, there is a need for an increase in the quality and quantity of the cooperation of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in order to develop better mechanisms of information exchange, reciprocal attendance at meetings and financial contributions to SELA activities. Above all, however, Ecuador should like to see SELA and ECLAC pool their capacities in order to reinvigorate the academic and political debate on the urgent need for a fairer and more equitable new world order, because the social turmoil in our continent reflects a disenchantment with and intolerance of the current world situation and urgently calls for effective alternatives to overcome the structural crises that, since the 1980s, have undermined the capacities and well-being of our peoples.

Similarly, complementary action between SELA and the agencies of the United Nations system will be important in securing firm support for technical and

economic cooperation among developing countries that is complementary with but not a substitute for North-South cooperation. This will optimize the rational use of resources stemming from cooperation and their impact on national development efforts.

The Millennium Summit set 2015 as the deadline for overcoming poverty. Since its endorsement by the General Assembly, very few tangible steps have been taken in that direction. Accordingly, it is a priority for the entire United Nations system to work more closely with regional organizations, including SELA, in order to achieve the targets set at Monterrey and Johannesburg and to realize the aspirations of all people to economic and social well-being, a basic element in the construction of productive societies that are ready to co-exist peacefully in a fair and dignified life now and in the future.

Mr. Kikaya (Kenya): Let me begin by extending to you, Sir, my deep appreciation for the excellent manner in which you have conducted this session.

My delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report in document A/57/351 on agenda item 22 (m) on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, in line with General Assembly resolution 56/48 of 7 December 2001. Indeed, the adoption of that particular resolution was in keeping with our collective resolve to enhance the role of the African Union in all activities of the United Nations concerning Africa, a position that Kenya is proud to associate itself with.

We acknowledge the fact that the development of the African continent will ultimately depend on the ownership of development policies and commitment of the African leaders and peoples. The cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations is expected to assume fresh dynamism following the launch of the African Union by African heads of State and Government on 10 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa. This important development launched the revitalization of the organization both in orientation and institutional structure. In addition, the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a programme of the African Union bears eloquent testimony to the commitment and determination of our peoples in the pursuit of sustainable development.

We welcome the positive support given by the international community to NEPAD and especially the adoption by the General Assembly of the declaration on NEPAD of 16 September 2002 and General Assembly resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002 on the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and support for NEPAD.

Development can only be achieved in an atmosphere of peace, stability and security. The escalation of conflicts in Africa has eroded development gains attained over the years. In recent times, it has been established that conflict situations are havens for the illegal exploitation of natural resources. To stem the tide of chaos, Kenya supports the role of the United Nations in the area of peace and security. We fully welcome any form of collaborative mechanism between the United Nations and the African Union in preventive diplomacy, particularly in the operation of peace missions in Africa. My delegation wishes to reiterate that Kenya will continue to participate in various peacekeeping operations whenever called upon.

My delegation welcomes the efforts of the United Nations in promoting peace in the Great Lakes region. We support the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and we remain confident that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will work closely with the African Union under the framework of Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in realizing tangible peace.

Kenya has been in the forefront of the search for peace in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions, especially in southern Sudan and in Somalia, as it is our conviction that no sustainable development can be achieved in an atmosphere of war and conflict. I therefore call upon the United Nations to lend support to regional and subregional initiatives of conflict early warning and response mechanisms with a view to enhancing our capacity in conflict prevention and management.

Kenya reiterates the important role of regional organizations in conflict resolution, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. However, cooperation between regional organizations, including the African Union, and the United Nations should be reinforced.

Humanitarian and emergency situations in Africa seem to elicit a slow response from the international community. Kenya continues to shoulder an enormous

burden resulting from the influx of refugees from neighbouring countries; we call for international support in alleviating that burden. The United Nations and the African Union need to collaborate in building Africa's capacity to mitigate both natural and man-made disasters. Kenya would like to draw the attention of the international community, particularly the United Nations system, to the need for Africa to be equipped with a rapid response mechanism to disasters on the continent, especially in terms of disaster preparedness, prevention and management. We hold the view that international solidarity is necessary in the prevention of the root causes of the problem of refugees and displaced persons, and we urge closer coordination and monitoring of global efforts in addressing the entire range of humanitarian crises.

Kenya is deeply concerned with the question of the excessive availability, accumulation and illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. These weapons threaten human security and hinder socio-economic development and political stability. It is therefore imperative that the global community take decisive steps to alleviate this problem. Kenya reaffirms its commitment to work hand in hand with the United Nations, the African Union and other regional organizations to stem this problem.

Most African countries are still amongst the poorest in the world; out of 34 least developed countries in the world 29 are from Africa. This calls for concerted efforts to correct the imbalance. The implementation of the commitments of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and other United Nations conferences and summits holds the key to sustainable development.

There is no doubt that the process of globalization and the rapid transformation of the international economic environment have contributed to the marginalization of sub-Saharan Africa. We call upon the United Nations agencies, in collaboration with the African Union, to play a more effective role in reducing the negative impact of globalization. In this regard, regional integration in the promotion of economic growth must be encouraged and supported.

My delegation is optimistic that the collaboration of the African Union and the United Nations in the implementation of the development agenda for Africa and in meeting the targets of the Millennium Declaration with respect to poverty eradication and the provision of shelter will eventually realize sustainable development in Africa.

Ms. Pià Comella (Andorra) (*spoke in French*): I have the pleasure of speaking on agenda item 22 (h), "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union". Since the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 56/46, and as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375), cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has steadily strengthened and grown. In that regard, we hail the leading role that the IPU has played in major international United Nations conferences. National parliaments, either through the IPU or because they were represented on national delegations, were able to participate in making decisions about conferences texts on sustainable development and security.

On sustainable economic and social development, the IPU made an active contribution which enriched, for example, the declarations adopted at the special session of the General Assembly on children and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg. First, the IPU and the United Nations Children's Fund organized a parliamentary forum on children at which 250 of parliamentarians from 75 countries adopted a set of recommendations and measures designed to protect and promote the rights and well-being of children. Then, in accordance with an initiative of the South African Parliament, the IPU brought together 300 parliamentarians from more than 50 countries in order to adopt a parliamentary declaration which was subsequently presented to the Johannesburg Summit.

In the area of peace and security, the IPU has played a pioneering role in combating terrorism. At its 106th Conference, on 11 September 2001, the IPU condemned with the utmost energy the terrorist attacks perpetrated against the United States and subsequently adopted a resolution in which it invited States to cooperate in combating and preventing terrorism. That resolution also invited national parliaments to promote or endorse the United Nations anti-terrorism conventions.

The Principality of Andorra, with a parliamentary tradition going back to 1419, can only welcome the fact that the General Assembly, by resolution 57/32,

invited the IPU to participate in its work as an observer. This will undoubtedly help to bolster cooperation between the two institutions.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Chile and his delegation for their work in drafting and conducting the negotiations on draft resolution A/57/L.38. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra told me personally that we would be sponsoring the resolution and that we would speak at this meeting, stressing the importance of strengthening cooperation between Governments and parliaments in the international arena of the United Nations. In Andorra we shall continue to actively support such cooperation.

Mr. Šerkšnys (Lithuania): Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union and associated countries.

I would like first to thank warmly the delegation of Malta, the country which recently assumed the duties of the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, for the presentation of draft resolution A/57/L.23, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. At the same time, allow me to express our appreciation to the delegation of Luxembourg, which did a remarkable job preparing the draft resolution.

Since 1989, the Council of Europe has enlarged its membership significantly and has integrated most of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe; it has supported them in their efforts to implement standards of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

With the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina earlier this year, the organization now counts 44 member States. In this regard, another important fact is that in September 2002 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted its opinion no. 239 (2002), on inviting the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to become a full member of the organization.

The Council of Europe remains the main standard setter in the field of the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the European continent. Therefore, continuous and increasing cooperation between this regional organization and the United Nations, in particular the Offices of the United Nations High Commissioners for Human Rights and for Refugees, UNICEF and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe should be supported by States members of both forums. The Council of Europe has tremendous experience in human rights education and training and legislative expertise, as well as experience in the elaboration of legally binding international instruments in the fields of human rights, criminal law, environment and culture and in the social sphere. It is important that the Council of Europe legal space be open to participation broader than only the membership of the organization.

Lithuania highly values the contribution of the Council of Europe to international action against terrorism, namely, successful elaboration of a draft protocol amending the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, carried by the Multi-disciplinary Group on International Action against Terrorism. At the same time, it is important to stress that the Council of Europe has elaborated and adopted a set of guidelines on human rights and the fight against terrorism.

During the last decade the death penalty has disappeared from many of the European criminal codes. For this, tremendous credit undoubtedly goes to the Council of Europe. Here, I wish to hail the adoption of Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which was opened for signature on 3 May 2002 in Vilnius. That document provides for abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances.

Regional cooperation can make an essential contribution to consolidating stability and security, and the Council of Europe plays a significant role in promoting regional cooperation, inter alia cooperation between regional organizations, various initiatives and processes in Europe, and the United Nations. In this regard my delegation considers the Vilnius Declaration on Regional Cooperation, adopted on 3 May 2002, to be a very important document, guiding regional cooperation which could be used in other parts of the world as well.

This year we witnessed the important event of the entry into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Also the first session of the Assembly of States Parties took place last September. The role of the Council of Europe in facilitating the entry into force of the Rome Statute and its readiness to provide States with the relevant assistance to become States parties are commendable.

In conclusion, I would like to express my conviction that cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe offers promising opportunities. The contribution of the Council of Europe to United Nations initiatives on the peace-building dialogue could be among prospective cooperation topics. Exchanges of information, views and good practices in fields of interest to both organizations at any level should be encouraged. In that regard, I would like to welcome the exchanges of views on United Nations matters relating to human rights, with the participation of experts from various States, held annually in Strasbourg.

Also in this connection, the importance of high-level tripartite meetings of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has to be emphasized. We thus strongly encourage a proactive approach and closer cooperation among all delegations and secretariats in New York, Geneva and Strasbourg.

Mr. Haneda (Japan): The importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly in addressing issues of conflict prevention and economic development, cannot be overstated.

This year we witnessed a truly historic event, namely the establishment of the African Union (AU). I would like first of all to comment upon cooperation between that regional organization and the United Nations. The problems Africa is facing pose tremendous challenges not only to the region itself but to the international community as a whole. In order to address these problems, Japan has consistently advocated the importance of Africa's ownership, that is its own initiatives and self-help efforts, as well as Africa's partnership with the international community, which supports such efforts.

Progress in development cannot be sustained for long unless the beneficiaries of development assume responsibility for tackling the challenges. Thus, African development must be initiated and led by the African peoples themselves. But at the same time, in order to help ensure the fruitfulness of those efforts, the international community, as an equal partner, should respect and support those efforts.

The countries of Africa have clearly demonstrated their ownership of the development process through the elaboration of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the establishment of the African Union. Japan and indeed the entire international community pay high tribute to them for these efforts and achievements.

I wish to emphasize that, hereafter, all cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, as well as other regional and subregional organizations in Africa, should be conducted in a manner conducive to encouraging and strengthening Africa's ownership. Japan's determination to make every effort in that regard is demonstrated in its plans to convene, in collaboration with the United Nations and other international organizations, the third Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD III) in October 2003.

Like development issues, the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa also require self-help efforts at the regional and subregional levels. Japan intends to continue to support the activities of the African Union in that area as well by encouraging the appropriate use of the AU Peace Fund, to which we recently made a contribution of $200,000.

Next, I would like to comment on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO). My delegation would like to commend the President of the organization's forty-first session, the Honourable Senator Kanu G. Agabi, and the Government of Nigeria for successfully hosting the very fruitful annual meeting of the AALCO in Abuja last July in their role as Chair. AALCO is a truly unique regional organization which promotes international legal cooperation; develops and disseminates expertise in international law by organizing annual meetings, seminars and workshops which focus on current issues in international law under consideration in various forums of the United Nations and other bodies; and contributes to the process of codification and development of international law. Japan is confident that the work of the codification of international law will be greatly advanced by strengthening the interaction between AALCO and the United Nations.

In conclusion, I wish to briefly comment on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). With the adoption of resolution 57/32, we believe that the IPU, with its unique character as a world organization representing national parliaments, will significantly strengthen the

parliamentary dimension of the work of the United Nations.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): The consideration of agenda item 22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations", is of great importance at a time when the demands of globalization call for rational integration of the world's activities.

The fact that so many institutions have expressed the desire to establish organizational links with the United Nations provides indisputable proof of the vitality of our Organization, as well as real reassurances for us who are its privileged members. Our hope is that through that cooperation, the efforts of all those organizations will serve to strengthen the United Nations in its leading and central role of promoting peace and justice throughout the world.

Given the equal importance of all the organizations concerned under agenda item 22, and without intending to be arbitrary, we would like to focus our attention on just a few of those organizations. I should first like to refer to the African Union.

To say the least, the challenges confronting Africa are enormous. First of all, there are the political challenges. In dealing with the demands of democratization and with social challenges — challenges that are sometimes tribal in nature — the continent is also being constantly challenged by internal conflicts and crises, most of which are associated with the problems inherent in devolution and a State's exercise of its powers. The resolution of those conflicts, either through preventive means or through peacekeeping operations, requires the assistance of the United Nations. In that regard, it is only right that we commend the role of the United Nations in calming a good number of regional crises in Africa. It is also important that we note the support of the United Nations for the democratization process, in particular in the area of providing electoral assistance to African countries.

With regard to economic challenges, the African Union expects a great deal from the United Nations in helping it to combat poverty, in accordance with the commitments set out in the Millennium Declaration. Cooperation with the United Nations will always be essential, whether with regard to the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, stemming the negative effects of globalization or making efforts to achieve sustainable development.

With regard to social and humanitarian concerns, the African Union is aware of the fact that a solution to the negative impact of the major epidemics ravaging Africa — in particular HIV/AIDS and malaria — as well as to many social constraints and problems — such as those associated with refugees, respect for human rights and improving the status of women and children — necessarily require partnership with the United Nations.

To end my comments on the subject of the African Union, I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate the members of the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations, who are primarily responsible for the cooperation between the Union and the Organization. I would like in particular to encourage them, for we know that, as they do not enjoy diplomatic status, they work under unenviable conditions.

My delegation stands in solidarity with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of South Africa on behalf of the African Union. My delegation has no doubt that the Assembly will give draft resolution A/57/L.39 its genuine and overwhelming support.

I should now like to turn to the subject of cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie (IOF). The IOF has proven its credibility as a cultural and linguistic instrument in the service of international cooperation. Founded under its current acronym just a few years ago, the IOF has since demonstrated remarkable dynamism and vitality given that its sphere is constantly expanding and its activities continue to become diversified.

Above all, the IOF is now an essential participant in the search for peace, the solving of crises and the strengthening of democratic institutions, not to mention its training assistance and its efforts at promoting human rights, among other things. Strengthening relations between the United Nations and the IOF, both of which pursue the same goals and objectives, is therefore a logical step.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the leaders of the Permanent Observer

Mission of the IOF to the United Nations, who are the force behind this dynamic policy of cooperation.

Given the merits of the IOF, we are certain that draft resolution A/57/L.29 will be adopted by consensus. I would also like to conclude my comments in this regard by recalling that the next IOF summit of heads of State or Government will be held in Burkina Faso in 2004.

I would now like to say a few words about the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The Assembly will recall that, for the last two years, my country has been among those vigorously calling for the IPU to be granted observer status at the United Nations. That has now become a reality. We are convinced that the very important step we have just taken will serve to further strengthen cooperation between the two organizations.

As we all know, the Inter-Parliamentary Union is the worldwide organization of parliaments of sovereign States. Its statute very clearly indicates that it shares the objectives of the United Nations. In fact, through its activities, the IPU is working towards peace and cooperation among peoples and the strengthening of representative democracy. To those ends, the Inter-Parliamentary Union promotes contacts, coordination and exchanges of experience between parliaments and parliamentarians of all countries. It also considers issues of national interest and expresses its views on those issues in order to stimulate subsequent actions by national parliaments. In that way it is contributing to intensifying international efforts in favour of peace. The United Nations is indeed aware of the advocacy role played by the IPU in the search for international security.

Strengthened by its new status, the IPU will be able to take advantage of its special rapport with the United Nations to further shape and strengthen its cooperation with the Organization. The basis for that cooperation has been established by virtue of the cooperation agreement signed with the United Nations in 1996, in which the IPU noted the responsibilities of the United Nations under the Charter and committed itself to continue to support the Organization's activities. The foundation for IPU-United Nations cooperation was also established through the strengthening of cooperation between the Organization and national parliaments called for by heads of State and Government in the Millennium Declaration, as well as through the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly of 26 June 2001, which endorsed the IPU's proposals on the role it could play to strengthen cooperation with the Organization.

It is for all those pertinent reasons that Burkina Faso fully supports draft resolution A/57/L.38. We are a sponsor of that draft resolution, and have no doubt that the Assembly will adopt it by consensus.

I cannot conclude my statement without congratulating the leaders of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and its representatives in New York in particular, for the results they have obtained.

Mr. Scott (Australia): I am pleased to be able to speak briefly to this agenda item on behalf of the Australian delegation. The range of sub-items grouped under agenda item 22 provides clear evidence of the very extensive network of cooperation and dialogue between the United Nations and regional and other entities. Australia is gratified by the constructive approach evident in these reports and in interventions that others have made before me. We are also encouraged to see this item serve as a practical example of the efforts of streamlining the work of this Assembly without compromising on the content of the matters under discussion. We think it entirely appropriate that the issues under this item will be addressed in future on a biennial basis.

Australia has been pleased to be a sponsor of a number of the draft resolutions presented under this agenda item, including that of cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum, on which the Ambassador of Fiji has spoken so eloquently on our behalf. As one of two full-time Australian parliamentary delegates to this General Assembly, I would like to make a few remarks about another draft resolution, namely on cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), introduced under agenda item 22 (h).

Notwithstanding Australia's long history of engagement with, and support for, the IPU, Australian parliamentary delegates to the General Assembly in the past have expressed caution about the need for the IPU to be represented formally at the United Nations. This stems from our belief that the parliaments of IPU member countries are in fact able to give voice to their views through their elected Governments and their representatives here in New York. That said, we note that arguments made in favour of the draft resolution have drawn attention to the particular nature of the IPU, noting its unique status as an inter-State body, and

have stressed that granting it the right to circulate official documents at no expense to the United Nations does not set a precedent for others. We believe these two points are very important. At a time when the Secretary-General is trying to rationalize the agenda and the workload of the United Nations, we are not sure that adding to the list of potential documents which must be processed and digested, in particular by smaller delegations, is necessarily going to help the streamlining and reform of United Nations administrative processes that we and many others strongly support.

Nonetheless, we are encouraged by advice that the volume of documents in question is unlikely to be great, and by the very strong support expressed by numerous sponsors of this draft resolution. We interpret this as a collective desire to make this new arrangement operate efficiently to further the cooperation between the two organizations. It is on this basis that Australia has joined the list of sponsors of this draft resolution.

Mr. Huston (Liechtenstein): When we met a year ago to discuss cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, the common fight against terrorism was the main topic on our agenda. Today, international action against terrorism is still a top political priority of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and also of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and therefore an important area where coordination and complementary efforts are essential.

We commend the important contribution made by the Council of Europe through its adoption of "Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism". These Guidelines are designed to help States find the right balance between the requirements of effectively protecting society and preserving human rights and fundamental freedoms, an undertaking that is also at the core of the activities of the United Nations. We are glad to point out that just this morning the Third Committee of the General Assembly adopted without a vote and recommended to the plenary a draft resolution on the "Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism" (A/C.3/57/L.61), thus complementing the existing efforts of the United Nations system.

Further priority areas of Council of Europe action in the fight against terrorism complement and advance the efforts of the United Nations. Preventing the financing of terrorism is one important example. The Council of Europe Select Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures has been mandated to give high priority to the assessment of the implementation by member States of the Special Recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on the financing of terrorism. The work of this committee includes on-site visits and typologies meetings, where financial and legal experts discuss prevalent money laundering methods, emerging threats and the development of effective counter-measures. At the last typologies meeting, which was held in Liechtenstein at the invitation of the Liechtenstein Government, counter-measures against the financing of terrorism were the main topic. The acting head of the United Nations Global Programme against Money-Laundering (GPML) participated as a keynote speaker. His contribution indicated the great potential for complementary action of both organizations in this area.

The OSCE, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, has been closely working together with the United Nations and its specialized organizations, in particular with regard to the global fight against terrorism. At the upcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Porto, Portugal, the Ministers will adopt a charter on preventing and combating terrorism that recognizes the importance of the work developed by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee and that reaffirms the obligation and willingness of participating States and the OSCE to cooperate with this Committee. The Charter recognizes that the relevant United Nations conventions, protocols, and Security Council resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), constitute the primary international legal framework for the fight against terrorism, and it reaffirms the commitment of all OSCE States to become parties as soon as possible to all 12 United Nations Conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. In turn, the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Chairman have emphasized the importance of the role of regional organizations, such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE, and the relevant legal instruments under their auspices.

As stated in the report prepared by the Secretary-General (A/57/225), the Council of Europe and the Center for International Crime Prevention continue to

share common interests in combating transnational organized crime, trafficking, corruption, and terrorism in Europe. In addition to the promising steps already taken, we welcome the suggestion made by the Secretary-General to further strengthen cooperation through information-sharing and better coordination in the delivery of assistance. The establishment of a mechanism for information-sharing on request for technical assistance is an idea that should be further developed. Such a mechanism would reduce the risk of duplication and help ensure the efficient and focused use of the resources of both organizations.

In the area of trafficking, the OSCE closely cooperates with the Center for International Crime Prevention. The Ministerial Council meeting in Porto will produce a roadmap for future coordination of these activities.

The report by the Secretary-General provides a wealth of indications on the continued close cooperation between the organizations on the working and political levels. Since a unique feature of the Council of Europe is its parliamentary dimension, we would like to express our satisfaction that during this reporting period there have been also exchanges between members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and high-level representatives of the United Nations. We believe that such contact is especially useful with regard to the assessment of the political and legal situation in certain countries.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe plays an important role in this respect, due to its mandate to monitor compliance of member States with the commitments they entered into when joining the organization. These commitments relate to the protection of human rights, the rule of law, democracy, and protection of the rights of minorities. This mechanism of the Council of Europe considerably helps to advance the ideals and values that are also defended by the United Nations.

It was also the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe which strongly advocated the elaboration of an international instrument to prohibit the abuse of the Internet for racist propaganda. The quintessential role of the Parliamentary Assembly, as a driving force for new initiatives, has thus again produced a tangible result. At its last session, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted an Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime concerning the Criminalization of Acts of a Racist or Xenophobic Nature Committed Through Computer Systems. This Protocol, the first of its kind, constitutes an important element of the follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, and gives a further example of the concrete contribution of the Council of Europe to international efforts under the leadership of the United Nations.

Mrs. Ninčić (Yugoslavia): It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to speak of the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and between the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

Basic values shared by the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe include stability, democracy and the rule of law and the promotion and strengthening of human rights and fundamental freedoms. All three multilateral organizations have for years been involved in South-East Europe, both in standard setting and the implementation of those common values. We would like to focus on the role of these organizations from the perspective of the experience of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

My Government would like to emphasize the fruitful cooperation between the OSCE and its Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, confirmed by a number of successfully completed projects and activities. As a result of this cooperation, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has been actively participating in the work of all OSCE bodies and organs and maintains cooperation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of Media.

My country is currently chairing the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation and has been actively engaged in the preparation of documents for the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial Council meeting, such as the OSCE Charter on the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism.

The OSCE Mission in Yugoslavia was established nearly two years ago. The Mission's mandate is to extend assistance and expertise to the Yugoslav authorities at all levels, as well as to interested individuals and organizations in the fields of democracy, protection of human rights, including rights of minorities, the rule of law and economic transition.

The scope of the Mission's activities encompasses the reform of the judiciary, public administration, the police and the media. In all these fields, the role of the OSCE in helping our country overcome a difficult legacy has been remarkable.

The prevailing, publicly stated opinion in OSCE circles is that the OSCE Mission in Yugoslavia represents a new model of a mission for the twenty-first century. It was established by the invitation of the host country, confirming Yugoslavia's willingness to work with and accept assistance from the international community in efficiently implementing reforms.

Cooperation being a two way process, we have found particularly valuable the relationship between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Mission, based on dialogue and the full exchange of information. The Mission actively consults with the competent ministries, local experts and non-governmental organizations, to the benefit of all concerned.

Confidence-building measures in South Serbia, implemented in close cooperation with the Coordinating Center of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia, are a distinctive segment of the Mission's activities, ranging from police training to engagement in local elections. Exemplary cooperation has been achieved between the United Nations and the OSCE in this part of our country. The results are a model of support in stabilizing a fragile situation.

We would like to use this opportunity to express once again our appreciation for the flexibility and expertise of the OSCE in the complex tasks it has undertaken in our country and South-East Europe as a whole. We look forward to our continued overall cooperation.

Much has been said in previous debates on the need for better coordination between various international organizations and their missions.

The United Nations and the OSCE have accomplished admirable cooperation in Kosovo and Metohija, where the OSCE constitutes an essential part of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo.

However, as on many previous occasions, we would like to emphasize the necessity of cooperation between the two OSCE Missions in our country — the OSCE Mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and Metohija. This would doubtlessly make possible better results in protecting minorities, returning refugees and internally displaced persons, resolving the issue of missing persons, as well as fighting terrorism and organized crime. For the same reasons, strong cooperation is also needed among OSCE missions deployed throughout South-East Europe.

Turning briefly to the Council of Europe, my Government wishes to express its appreciation of this organization's valuable contribution to the promotion of United Nations principles within South-East Europe. This is done not only for these countries' sake, but for the security of the region and thereby Europe as a whole.

In this context, we appreciate the role of the Council of Europe Mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We also welcome the engagement of the Council of Europe in developing a proposal for decentralization in Kosovo and Metohija.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recently recommended the accession of Yugoslavia to this organization. Our country has agreed to a series of commitments, declaring its readiness to continue its democratic reforms within the Council of Europe. Having neared the end of this process, we fully expect to become a member well before the next debate on this agenda item in the General Assembly.

In conclusion, allow me to say that we welcome the overall efforts of the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe in assisting the Western Balkans to become just another region of a united Europe.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): This statement on behalf of the Pakistani delegation concerns cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). Pakistan has the privilege of being a founding member of both these organizations.

The Organization of Islamic Conference is one of the largest intergovernmental organizations; its 56 members and four observer States come from Asia, Africa and Europe. As the collective voice of the Muslim world, the OIC has been engaged over the years in a constructive and cooperative relationship with the United Nations, reinforcing common efforts in pursuit of peace and development.

The OIC has endeavoured to promote better understanding and dialogue between and among different civilizations and cultures.

It has taken significant measures in fostering peace, in promoting social and economic development, in combating ethnic or racial intolerance and in seeking an end to the causes of injustice and instability, which are a constant threat to world peace and security.

In the aftermath of the tragic events of 11 September, the Islamic world, under the auspices of the OIC, joined the international community in our common endeavour and fight against international terrorism. The OIC has been unequivocal in its condemnation of terrorism. It has adopted its own convention to deal with this scourge and that convention represents a comprehensive framework with a clear definition of terrorism, while upholding the United Nations Charter's cardinal principle of self-determination and acknowledging the legitimacy of freedom struggles against foreign occupation and alien domination. The OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism offers a useful model.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which recapitulates the progress achieved during the past year by the United Nations system and the OIC in promoting their shared goals of international peace and security and development. We also welcome the effective contacts and consultations that the two organizations have maintained over the past several years.

The two organizations have regularly interacted on a number of political issues, including Kashmir, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Middle East and Palestine. Their mutually supportive role and their determination to promote negotiations to resolve these conflicts continue to receive wide international support.

Cooperation between the two organizations has also been increasing in a wide range of socio-economic areas of mutual interest. It is gratifying to note that a general meeting of representatives of the Secretariat of the United Nations system and the OIC was held earlier this year in Vienna. Another meeting of focal points of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and the OIC and its subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated units was held concurrently. This formal interaction will further enhance cooperation between the two organizations. We are of the view that the two sides should continue to examine ways and means of further expanding and diversifying their cooperation by identifying new areas.

Pakistan has the great privilege of chairing one of the two main committees of the OIC, namely the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, which is known as COMSTECH. The Pakistan-based Committee is responsible for promoting cooperation in the fields of science and technology among Muslim countries. Pakistan is also host to the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is another major regional organization seeking to promote socio-economic development of its member States on the basis of their common needs and in keeping with the challenges on the global economic scene. The organization was founded by Pakistan, Iran and Turkey as the successor organization to the Regional Cooperation for Development. In 1992, it was expanded to include Afghanistan and the newly established Central Asian States of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as well as Azerbaijan.

ECO has played an important role in strengthening and promoting multidimensional regional economic cooperation among its member countries. It has identified four priority areas for intense regional cooperation — namely, trade, transport, communications and energy. The project-oriented Almaty Outline Plan underscores the importance that ECO member States attach to the development of transport and communications infrastructure linking the ECO member States with each other and with the outside world.

The conclusion of two important agreements — namely, the ECO Transit Trade Agreement and the ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement — has given further impetus to the expansion of regional trade and economic cooperation.

The ECO region covers a territory of more than seven million square kilometres and includes a population of nearly 350 million people. The region has immense natural resources, and its members have the political will to tap these resources for the mutual advantage of all. With peace having returned to Afghanistan, ECO can serve not only as a vehicle for

the post-war reconstruction of Afghanistan, but also for developing and integrating the economies of the region, which have borne the brunt of the conflict in Afghanistan.

ECO already has in place the blueprints for the region-wide development of transport and communications infrastructure, facilities for trade and investment, banking and insurance, culture and education and effective use of the region's vast energy resources. We expect the United Nations system and the international community to support the efforts of the ECO and its member States in order to realize these blueprints, not only for the benefit of the region, but also for the world at large.

To conclude, I would like to express our hope and confidence that the cooperation of the United Nations with both the OIC and the ECO will continue to flourish to the mutual benefit of the organizations concerned. Pakistan, as a proud member of the United Nations, the OIC and the ECO, would remain actively involved in the work of all three.

Mr. Kulyk (Ukraine): It is my pleasure to participate in this joint debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations.

From the point of view of the substance of today's topic, we firmly believe that close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is a decisive factor in meeting the challenges faced by the world community. Therefore, the importance of the right relationship between them, as well as an adequate level of understanding and mutual support, cannot be overestimated.

Ukraine notes with satisfaction the increasing cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Among the major achievements, I would like first of all to mention the coordinated actions in the fight against international terrorism. We believe that the OSCE Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism to be adopted at the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial meeting in Porto will become another significant contribution made by the OSCE to United Nations-led international efforts in this sphere.

We also believe that the United Nations-OSCE dialogue should be further strengthened through joint endeavours to elaborate a comprehensive strategy for conflict prevention on the basis of the wide use of preventive diplomacy and peace-building efforts.

My country supports all the constructive steps taken to foster coordination and synergy between the United Nations and the OSCE, aimed at bringing peace and stability to the areas in the OSCE region challenged by security threats.

In this regard, let me also welcome the positive developments in cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. In particular, we are pleased with their steady involvement in the process of post-conflict rehabilitation and strengthening of the rule of law in South-Eastern Europe. For its part, Ukraine remains ready to further contribute to this vital process.

My country attaches special importance to the activities of one of the oldest organizations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Having reviewed cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations in the past 12 months, we highly appreciate the achievements made to date. We hope that the invitation to participate in the capacity of observer, recently extended by the General Assembly to the IPU, will strengthen cooperation with this important inter-parliamentary organization.

This year witnessed the historic birth of a new regional organization, the African Union (AU), which assumed the rights and responsibilities of the Organization of African Unity. I would like to reiterate Ukraine's support for the African Union's objectives of securing sustainable peace, stability and development in the continent.

We attach great importance to the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional African organizations in the areas of peace and security and political, economic and social development. Ukraine highly commends the continued efforts of the Secretary-General and the United Nations system in promoting such cooperation.

As the African Union is moving forward with the development of its institutional structures, it is important that effective coordination be established between the United Nations system and new mechanisms of the African Union. Particular attention in this regard should be also given to the effective implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Let me conclude by commending the important role of the International Organization of la Francophonie in promoting and expanding multilateral cooperation in the areas of peace, democracy and human rights, as well as in the social and economic spheres.

The outcome of the Ninth Summit of la Francophonie in Beirut in October this year clearly underlined the importance of promoting the dialogue of cultures and civilizations and bringing peoples closer together through mutual understanding in the interests of consolidating peace, democracy and respect for human rights. I would also like to reiterate the willingness of Ukraine, whose people fully share the values, goals and priorities of la Francophonie, to join the activities of this organization as an observer.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): Austria welcomes this second joint debate on cooperation between the United Nations and several regional and other organizations under a single agenda item. Austria would like to refer to the statement by the Presidency of the European Union and add a few brief observations due to the interest and special responsibilities that Austria has in regard to certain organizations.

Austria has been actively engaged in the work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) since the beginning of the process of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. We are honoured and proud to host this organization, which has proved itself an important actor in the field of conflict prevention, civil crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. My delegation would like to thank the Portuguese chairmanship for its untiring engagement this year on behalf of the Organization.

The OSCE and the United Nations are close partners in the efforts for peace, democracy and prosperity. We must continue to strengthen this relationship. Today's threats to security and stability are of such a complex and diverse nature that no single institution or country on its own is able to combat them effectively. One example of the excellent cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations is the effort in countering terrorism. After 11 September 2001, the OSCE adopted two far-reaching documents to prevent and combat terrorism: the Bucharest Plan of Action and the Bishkek Programme of Action. Both require close interaction between the organs of the OSCE and those of the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention in Vienna.

As host of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Austria assumes a special responsibility for the successful preparation of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Since the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO Preparatory Committee took up its work at the Vienna International Centre in 1997, under its Executive Secretary Wolfgang Hoffmann, much progress has been achieved. The impressive number of signatures and ratifications demonstrates the growing support for this Treaty: 166 States have signed, and 97 States have deposited their instrument of ratification.

Unfortunately, the number of States whose ratification is required for the CTBT's entry into force is stagnating at 31. We must intensify our efforts to convince the necessary countries to ratify the Treaty. In this respect, my delegation underlines the importance of the third conference on facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT, to be convened in 2003. This will be the opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the CTBT and underline its importance in the context of nuclear non-proliferation.

Austria appreciates the high quality of the cooperation of the United Nations with the Council of Europe. This is particularly true for the work of both organizations on the ground, inter alia: cooperation with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo in areas such as judicial and legal training, elections and the preparation of legislation; cooperation with United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding post-accession requirements and the legislative work with the Council's Venice Commission; and the joint efforts in Georgia with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, inter alia, to normalize the situation in the Gali sector and thus facilitate the return of internally displaced persons.

Austria supports the ongoing work involving both the Council of Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, both of which cover areas which are dealt with at the regional level by the Council of Europe. We are also pleased to note that the Council of Europe played a constructive role this year, both before and during the

General Assembly's special session on Children and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. I am confident that the Member States of the United Nations and States members of the Council of Europe will continue to support Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Secretary General Walter Schwimmer in their efforts to intensify the dialogue between the two organizations.

Before closing, I would also like to congratulate the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) for having formally received observer status in the General Assembly earlier this week. As a sponsor of both the resolution in the Sixth Committee on the observer status and the resolution under our current agenda item, Austria supports the special cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations. By including the IPU in its debates, the General Assembly will acknowledge the voices of the elected representatives of our peoples and will benefit not only from their valuable contributions on the issues but from additional democratic legitimacy.

As a host country to the United Nations and to various other international and regional organizations, Austria has stressed the urgent need for closer inter-organizational dialogue at the policy-making stage. Consequently, Austria initiated, together with the International Peace Academy (IPA), a process to analyse, inter alia, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations at annual seminars in Vienna. In July 2000, IPA and Austria celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Vienna Seminar with a commemorative session entitled "Sharing political space in peacekeeping: The United Nations and regional organizations, the case of Europe". The last two seminars focused on practical lessons learned in the Caucasus and in Central Asia and on the improvement of institutional cooperation in the future. At the 2003 Vienna seminar we plan to take a closer look at the prospects for cooperation between the United Nations and European organizations in peace operations. We hope that these annual seminars will continue to make a useful contribution to improving inter-organizational cooperation to the benefit of the organizations and their member States.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations A/57/PV.56

General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

56th plenary meeting
Thursday, 21 November 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Miss Clarke (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 22 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(a) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/122)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.18)

(b) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/87)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.11)

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/254)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.26)

(d) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.23)

(e) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/266 and A/57/266/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.25)

(f) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/119)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.22)

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/358)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.29)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

02-70350 (E)

(h) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.38)

(i) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/128)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.24)

(j) Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/386)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.32)

(k) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (A/57/576)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.31)

(l) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe: report of the Secretary-General (A/57/217)

(m) Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351, A/57/351/Corr.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.39)

(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/267)

(o) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/405)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.28)

(p) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/475)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.21)

(q) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive-Secretary of the Preparatory Commission (A/57/255)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.40)

(r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/94, A/57/94/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.30)

(s) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations

Draft resolution (A/57/L.16)

Mrs. Fotso (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): The Millennium Declaration states that:

> "Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. As the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role." *(resolution 55/2, part I, para. 6)*

Given the complexity of global problems and the solidarity that is required among States, our

Organization has become the most appropriate forum for the development of fruitful and multidimensional international cooperation. The United Nations is not only at the heart of international cooperation; it is the driving force behind it. The role played by the United Nations in this area today is unique and irreplaceable.

Given the diversity of cultures and of peoples and the variety of geographical and socio-economic conditions prevailing on our planet, the regional organizations are indispensable to the management of the problems specific to regions and to subregions.

The well-being of peoples and their future are at the heart of the concerns of the United Nations and of the regional and other organizations. This reality underpins the cooperation that they maintain through a variety of agreements. This cooperation should be aimed not only at the financing of projects by the United Nations, but also, and especially, at strengthening the capacities of regional organizations. The United Nations has extensive experience, acquired over the years in dealing with a wide variety of situations, and it should share this experience with others.

Regional organizations should, in their activities, serve as effective relays for the work of the United Nations on the ground, thereby enabling the most effective use of the resources of the Organization. It must be acknowledged, however, that not all regional organizations require the same level of attention from the United Nations. Some expect from the United Nations system a stepped-up multi-sectoral cooperation because of their specific situation. This is the case of the African Union, which is responsible for dealing with the serious problems relating to peace, security and development in Africa.

Recognizing the need to meet the specific needs of Africa, the heads of State or Government gathered at the 2000 Millennium Summit and committed themselves to helping Africans in their quest to establish peace, achieve sustainable development and eliminate poverty, with a view to integrating the African continent into the global economy.

Africa has become keenly aware of the exigencies of its particular situation. The establishment of the African Union — the successor to the Organization of African Unity — in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, and the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) are the outcome of this growing awareness.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the pan-African organization must focus on two current issues of interest to Africa. The United Nations maintains a very ambitious programme with respect to Africa, as was stressed by the Secretary-General in his report dated 19 October 2001. But the many problems that are specific to Africa must be dealt with in a particular and holistic way. That is why we deem it urgent to implement the idea of creating, at the level of the Secretary-General, a special structure responsible for African problems. Such a high-level structure would be charged with elaborating, formulating and coordinating all aspects of cooperation between the United Nations system and the African Union.

Along the same lines, the United Nations Liaison Office in Addis Ababa should be strengthened materially and given additional human resources, and the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union at the United Nations should be brought more closely into play in connection with the United Nations activities relating to Africa.

Africa has high hopes for the African Union, particularly as concerns the promotion and the maintenance of peace and security in the continent. The United Nations must take a fresh look at its cooperation programme with Africa in order to adapt it to the new aspirations of the African Union. The Peace and Security Council and the council of wise persons envisaged under the Constitutive Act of the pan-African organization deserve the fullest attention of the United Nations insofar as their establishment and operation are concerned.

The Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, established in January 2002, should place this question on its agenda.

In a continent ravaged by crises and which has the highest number of displaced persons and refugees in the world, special emphasis must be placed on post-conflict reconstruction operations. Multilateral programmes for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and reconstruction must be created. By the same token, the support of the United Nations in prompting donors to contribute to the Peace Fund of the African Union should make it possible to come up with the resources required for financing disarmament,

demobilization, reintegration and reconstruction activities.

NEPAD, created under the auspices of the African Union — and which received a favourable response from the international community during the high-level debate held in the Assembly on this issue on 16 September last — requires particular support from the relevant United Nations agencies.

Africa expects from the United Nations and from its other partners the necessary support for NEPAD to be translated into concrete action. Cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations is particularly important in the social realm and in particular in the combat against HIV/AIDS. In this connection, we welcome the support of the United Nations for the convening — on the initiative of the First Lady of Cameroon, Mrs. Chantal Biya — of an African First Ladies Summit devoted to HIV/AIDS, which was held at Yaoundé on 15 and 16 November last.

The African Union, like NEPAD, has the support of the five subregional African organizations. We welcome the cooperation that the United Nations maintains with them, which makes it possible to take into account the specific characteristics of each.

Central Africa, a pivotal region in the heart of the African continent, is a microcosm of the ills that are undermining Africa. With this in mind, cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States should be strengthened in terms of the maintenance and consolidation of peace and security, and also in the quest for the economic integration of the subregion.

The public meeting of the Security Council held on 22 October last on the initiative and under the presidency of Cameroon on "Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations system and the Central African region in the maintenance of peace and security" is part of this set of considerations.

My delegation endorses and welcomes the statement made before the Assembly by the representative of the Republic of the Congo on behalf of the Economic Community of Central African States.

The presidential statement on Central Africa (S/PRST/2002/31) issued by the Security Council on 31 October last charted the course for a more dynamic cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States. It confirms the imperative need for closer cooperation between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations.

In conclusion, Cameroon welcomes the submission at this session of draft resolution A/57/L.38 on the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which we support and of which we are a sponsor.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/32 of 19 November 2002, I now call on Mr. Sergio Páez, President of the Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. Páez (Inter-Parliamentary Union) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to begin by expressing the gratitude of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to the United Nations and its Member States for having granted observer status to our organization. That decision represents an important milestone in the evolution of the relationship between the world organization of national parliaments and the United Nations. Both of our organizations were created to promote peace, security and the well-being of all nations. The IPU had its origins in the peace movement of the late nineteenth century. It is sustained by a basic principle that retains all of its validity today: that the problems confronting States should be solved through dialogue and communication, not through weapons or the threat of war.

Over the years, the Inter-Parliamentary Union has played a discreet but valuable role in bringing people closer together. As parliamentarians, we are particularly able to help solve problems by making use of our parliamentary and personal skills. Often, we are able to open channels of communication and to build bridges of international understanding when official diplomacy is unable or unwilling to do so.

The fundamental concept that underlies the exercise of democracy is respect for others. Democratic life entails both the right to differ and the acceptance of such differences by everyone. The point is to recognize and to accept diversity rather than to reject it. Parliamentary practice takes those differences and uses them to build majorities and to forge agreements; we parliamentarians can help to achieve the national consensus that is necessary for international action.

Certainly, parliaments are composed of majorities and minorities, of parties in power and those in

opposition, and it is in the fertile tensions of adversarial debate that we feel comfortable. We practice argumentation and prefer political dialogue to elegant consensus. Our mandates are bestowed by our electors, and if we do not fulfil their expectations, we lose our seats. Such are the rules of democracy. I mention that only to point out that the Inter-Parliamentary Union will never be able to offer a consensual opinion on the entire range of matters that are considered by the United Nations. And, I hasten to add, I do not believe that that will be expected of us. However, I believe that there are many areas in which the work of the IPU can be beneficial to the United Nations.

We are witnessing a sweeping evolution in international relations that makes it imperative to bring ordinary people closer to the work of multilateral cooperation and of international negotiating forums. In today's world of accelerated mass communication, where the most prominent national issues extend well beyond national borders, we have no other choice but to contribute much more actively to international cooperation. That is the reason why, two years ago, the Inter-Parliamentary Union brought to this Hall the presiding officers of the world's parliaments. In an unprecedented summit, the world parliamentary community, at the highest level, committed itself to providing a parliamentary dimension to international cooperation. The Declaration adopted on that occasion also stipulated that parliaments represent the sovereignty of peoples and can, with complete legitimacy, contribute to expressing their wishes in the international arena. That assertion is the basis for the first important step on the long road towards a more democratic international order.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, the world's oldest international political organization, played a pioneering role in developing international cooperation well over 100 years ago. Like all international organizations, it has had to adapt to the new environment in which the world is operating. Like no other international organization, it has a prominent role to play in helping to make international cooperation more democratic.

Therefore, we welcome this opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the United Nations and national parliaments through the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Millennium Declaration recognizes the need for the United Nations to work more closely with parliaments in various fields, including peace and security, economic and social development, international law and human rights, and democracy and gender issues. That, by definition, is a broad mandate. It coincides with that of the IPU, and this year's report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between our organizations (A/57/375) provides a wide range of examples in which the IPU has provided practical support to United Nations action in each of those fields.

As a democrat, I wish to emphasize the singular contribution that the IPU can make to the promotion of democracy. Our organization takes a holistic view of democracy, recognizing it both as an ideal to attain and as a system of governance. Democracy aims to preserve and to promote the dignity and the fundamental rights of the individual and therefore has much in common with development and social justice. It also ensures the people's participation in conducting the affairs of State. Any true democracy requires institutions that respect the rule of law and promote human rights. The Inter-Parliamentary Union has the ambition to promote movement towards internationally recognized democratic values. Bearing that in mind, in 1997 it adopted the Universal Declaration on Democracy, which establishes the fundamental principles of democracy and describes the components and the exercise of democratic government.

Our daily work in the Inter-Parliamentary Union reflects that vision of democracy. We place particular emphasis on the need to strengthen parliaments and democratic institutions, to build partnerships among men and women in political affairs and to strengthen human rights. By the same token, we promote development, specifically by supporting and providing parliamentary input to the processes launched by the United Nations in Monterrey and Johannesburg.

I would like to suggest that we examine together those areas where parliamentary interaction with the United Nations is of particular importance and urgency at this stage. More specifically, I would like to invite the Assembly to a dialogue with the Inter-Parliamentary Union in which we determine together how best parliaments, through the Inter-Parliamentary Union, can assist in following up and implementing the Millennium Declaration and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

For our part, the Inter-Parliamentary Union is committed to a new stage of cooperation with the

United Nations that will provide genuine mutual benefit to both organizations. Members may rest assured that the resolution addressed to the IPU in the part of the Millennium Declaration that deals with the strengthening of the United Nations will not fall on barren ground. It will be taken up with the utmost seriousness by the parliaments of IPU, in close partnership with the members of the United Nations.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/18 of 10 November 1978 and General Assembly decision 53/453 of 18 December 1998, I now call on the observer for the International Organization of la Francophonie.

Mr. Bouabid (International Organization of la Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): The French-speaking community is grateful to the Secretary-General for his availability and for his efforts to enrich cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie. The report before us on this issue, I believe, clearly underlines the desires of both organizations, on the one hand, to consolidate the achievements made since 1995, when this item was first inscribed on the General Assembly's agenda, and, on the other, tirelessly to seek new avenues in which the complementarity between the two organizations can be fully expressed in the service of peace and the development of French-speaking countries.

We have watched this complementarity become ever more concrete in averting or stemming potential or declared conflict situations, in encouraging and entrenching the culture and practice of democracy, and in promoting dialogue and cooperation by eliminating the logic of force and the cycle of violence. We have seen this complementarity expressed in a series of development initiatives and projects that have been undertaken jointly with agencies of the United Nations system and that cover such diverse fields as education, training, energy, human rights protection and the promotion of information and communication technologies. Ultimately, we owe this complementarity to a common approach that favours the force of dialogue over the dialogue of force, that works resolutely for peace, security and sustainable development and that, more broadly, advocates respect for diversity by giving ample space to the dialogue among cultures and civilizations. The events that are currently dominating the international scene fully confirm the need to continue along this path.

That is why the most recent Francophonie summit, held in Beirut just a month ago, focused its work on the subject of dialogue among cultures. In basing itself on a very broad definition of culture, la Francophonie has sought to make a specific project of that dialogue which presupposes full acceptance of diversity in all aspects of life, including international life. What better place than Lebanon, a country of ancient roots that has been home to successive peoples and civilizations, to engage in fruitful reflection on the dialogue among cultures — a dialogue capable of generating new spaces for cooperation among civilizations in the context of shared complementarity.

An instrument of peace, democracy and human rights and an ineluctable pillar of development, the dialogue among cultures is a powerful engine

> "to fight poverty and contribute to the emergence of a more equitable form of globalization that will bring progress, peace, democracy and human rights, in full respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, in the interests of the most vulnerable populations and the development of all countries". (*A/57/L.29, sixth preambular paragraph*)

This is the strategy set out in the Beirut declaration. This is the platform that guides our action. This is the vision that inspires our cooperation with our international partners, including the United Nations.

The report of the Secretary-General lists specific examples of our activity in partnership with the United Nations to contribute to the achievement of our common goals. This cooperation has developed along the right lines, grown richer from year to year and covers the most diverse fields. We particularly welcome the appreciation expressed for this cooperation in draft resolution A/57/L.29.

I believe, however, that we can go further still, particularly in two priority areas that we feel could be explored further and generate an even more sustained dynamic of cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie.

The first is that of sustainable development. From the preparatory phases of the Rio Summit to the recent adoption of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, la Francophonie has played an active part, especially by way of supporting the development of national sustainable development policies in French-speaking

countries and mobilizing necessary expertise to those ends. In Johannesburg, we had the opportunity, through a series of workshops, to update participants on our contribution to the implementation of Agenda 21 and on the framework for action that will guide our activities over the next 10 years in the follow-up to the Johannesburg Summit. There are vast opportunities for cooperation here. I hope that we will be in a position to explore them further, particularly in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and in the light of the forthcoming tenth summit conference of la Francophonie, to be held in Burkina Faso in 2004 under the central theme of sustainable development.

By way of illustration, I wish to cite two initiatives in which we should like to see the United Nations significantly involved. The first is a projected international high-level meeting that la Francophonie intends to organize in follow-up to the conference of economic and finance ministers of the French-speaking countries, held in Monaco in 1998, and on the basis of the Monterrey Consensus. This meeting will seek to establish synergies and support mechanisms for bilateral and multilateral, public and private, North-South and South-South partnerships and above all to improve the access of French-speaking countries of the South to multilateral sources of financing. Then, as a follow-up to the Johannesburg Summit, la Francophonie wishes next year to initiate partnership with the bilateral and multilateral actors concerned, aimed at implementing and consolidating a worldwide French-speaking information system on sustainable development, strengthening capacities in the field of energy for sustainable development and controlling the management of the environment and of sustainable development.

Besides sustainable development, the second priority field to be further explored is that of support for democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Ever since the adoption of the Bamako Declaration, la Francophonie has had recourse to a legislative instrument covering the entire field of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, together with a preventive, proactive and reactive policy mechanism. Procedures are defined in the Declaration to monitor the practices of democracy in the French-speaking community. These procedures are aimed at prevention and the adoption of specific measures and actions in the case of democratic crisis and grave human rights violations or of democratic breakdown or mass violations of human rights. These steps are designed to facilitate the achievement of consensus solutions to crises and to promote the restoration of constitutional order. What we are trying to do here is to help States to overcome certain difficulties. We are not putting anyone on trial here. It is not a question of judging, but rather of helping and accompanying countries, by means of consultation, which makes it possible to combine solidarity, promptness, flexibility and effectiveness. This is the second area of undertaking in which cooperation with the United Nations is to be encouraged.

In conclusion, I would like to say that we express our appreciation to the Lebanese delegation on behalf of the OIF, for having introduced the draft resolution on this agenda item, and also, likewise, express our gratitude to the 70 countries — French-speaking and non-French-speaking alike — who became sponsors of this text. We are grateful to them for the token of support that they have shown for this young but promising cooperation between the United Nations and la Francophonie.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/2 of 13 October 1980, I now call on the Observer of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

Mr. Kamil (Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization): Through you, Madam, I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly for giving me the honour of addressing this Assembly on behalf of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO). We have closely monitored his wise and smooth approach while presiding over the work of the Assembly. We congratulate him and wish him all the success needed to complete the session and achieve all its goals.

While introducing the item and the draft resolution, the current President of the AALCO and head of the Nigerian delegation referred to the potential role of AALCO in promoting international law in Asia, Africa and beyond. I thank His Excellency and always hope to meet the expectations of member States and United Nations organizations in our quest to enhance the rule of law in international relations for better international cooperation.

Before elaborating on our programme for cooperation between United Nations and AALCO, allow me to explain why we are so motivated in

enhancing this cooperation. The United Nations, in spite of its limitations, has made significant contributions towards maintaining international peace and security, as well as in the economic and social fields. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations in 2001 was a recognition of its valuable contribution in these areas.

The Millennium Declaration, adopted unanimously in September 2000, articulated and affirmed the role and vision of the United Nations in meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century. In that Declaration, the United Nations Member States reaffirmed their determination, inter alia, to establish a just and lasting peace, to uphold the sovereign equality of all States, to resolve disputes by peaceful means, to respect human rights, to respect the rule of law in international as well as national affairs and to make the United Nations more effective in monitoring peace and security by giving it the resources and tools it needs for conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of disputes, peacekeeping and peace-building. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Declaration attached importance to strengthening cooperation with regional organizations in achieving these objectives.

As a regional legal organization, we are proud to cooperate with the United Nations. We are determined to enhance and strengthen this cooperation, and we are motivated to urge each and every nation and organization to do so.

We are fully convinced of the necessity of this cooperation, and we totally believe in the invaluable role that the Organization plays and should play as a forum for the nations of the world, its peoples and Governments, and in its unique quest to relieve the suffering that could afflict the international community as a whole, in part, or even one human being. Do we not all know that each and every individual is a microcosm, whether he lives on Fifth Avenue or on the smallest unpaved street in the nooks and crannies of an Asian or African village?

We should always remember that the first five words in the Preamble of the Charter set the tone for the whole Charter; it commits the Organization to symbolizing the aspirations of the world population. We believe strongly that it is the living conscience of humanity.

When I speak of the "living conscience of humanity", I underline that the selected diplomats and officials from all over the world should remind themselves when gathering here in this important venue that it is with a living conscience and the awareness that they are brothers and sisters, that they are men working to save and to help men and that they are gathered to eliminate and resolve animosities of all kinds.

In the minds of the representatives of the nations united here, the United Nations is, and should always be, the sole forum of conciliation and harmonization on the planet. They should be constantly aware that it is the last resort for success in avoiding the roaring of the guns and the launching of rockets to different destinations and, of course, the horror of using weapons of mass destruction.

The United Nations Organization was, is and should be the giant symbol of peace and security for humanity. Without these two fundamental pillars — peace and security — we will not be able to build and implement the United Nations programmes of development in all fields in order to bridge the gap between rich and poor nations.

Peace and security entail many needs in order to be maintained, but that which is dearest to humanity is the supremacy of the rule of law, its enhancement, its implementation and, above all, its respect by all nations for the benefit of all nations and peoples, with full determination and good will. Therefore, we fully agree with the wise ideas expressed by the United Nations Secretary-General when he said to reporters that success depends on national efforts and that all the United Nations can do is to keep reminding Governments of their pledges and urge them to do whatever is needed to make them come true. He also said that if we carry on as we are, most of the pledges are not going to be fulfilled and we are, therefore, moving too slowly.

AALCO, for its part, is committed to playing its role in preserving these noble objectives. Indeed, it has taken several initiatives in this direction. Again, I would like to reaffirm our full commitment to working with the United Nations and other sister organizations in making a joint and concerted effort to establish a shared future based on fundamental human values.

Allow me to turn to some specific activities of AALCO. Today, it is a full-fledged intergovernmental organization. It has embarked upon a wide range of activities, which include the consideration of issues

referred to it by Member States, assistance to Member States in the preparation of model legislation, extensive cooperation with the United Nations and its Agencies, training programmes and the dissemination of information on international law matters.

The current work programme of AALCO includes several items related to matters of contemporary international law. I wish to elaborate on its work in just a few areas. I shall begin with the issue of international terrorism.

Issues concerning international terrorism have always had great importance, and especially so after the tragic incident in New York on 11 September last year and more recent events in other parts of the world. The United Nations has been playing a central role in mobilizing international action and support to meet the threat of terrorism. Regrettably, negotiations for the conclusion of a comprehensive international convention to combat international terrorism have been marking time because of pending issues. During its last two annual sessions, AALCO has considered that and other related issues. It is our view that the need of the hour is to demonstrate the political will to resolve the issues pending and to complete work on the international convention as soon as possible. The Counter-Terrorism Committee established by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) is doing useful work that will facilitate achieving the overall objective of strengthening the legal regime to combat international terrorism.

The legal regime concerning the protection of human rights has been built on the solid foundation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international instruments. However, sometimes, the politicization of human rights issues affects the unbiased implementation of those instruments. In that context, I wish to mention that AALCO, in implementing the Memorandum of Understanding, has, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, started a comprehensive programme on this item. At AALCO's 41st session, held in Abuja in July of this year, a special meeting on human rights and combating terrorism was organized with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Among the issues discussed were problems related to the application of human rights standards in a terrorist situation and the gaps that exist within current international legal structures. At that session, an item entitled "Human Rights in Islam" was included on the agenda of AALCO.

The environment and sustainable development are other areas that have attracted worldwide attention. The recent World Summit held in Johannesburg reaffirmed the importance of the effective implementation of Agenda 21. AALCO has been monitoring progress in its implementation, as well as that of the international conventions on the environment. I had the privilege of addressing the high-level segment of the Eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in New Delhi recently. Highlighting the concerns of developing countries, I stressed the importance of adhering to the principle of common yet differentiated responsibilities within the Framework Convention process. In order to give a new thrust to its programme in the field of environmental law, AALCO plans to establish an energy and environmental law centre.

The issue of the status and treatment of refugees has been considered by AALCO for over 35 years. The adoption of the revised text of its Bangkok Principles on the Status and Treatment of Refugees at its New Delhi session in 2001 was a landmark decision. With a view to further strengthening cooperation between UNHCR and AALCO, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by High Commissioner Ruud Lubbers and myself on 23 May 2002. The Memorandum of Understanding, as well as formalizing the long-established cooperation between the two organizations, provides for the exchange of documents, mutual consultations and joint initiatives by both organizations. In the furthering of this objective, we intend to hold a seminar early next year on issues concerning secondary movement, an agenda for protection and burden-sharing.

Other humanitarian issues, such as the protection of migrant workers and trafficking in women and children, have also received ample consideration in AALCO meetings.

At a time when the movement of money across borders is becoming increasingly difficult to regulate and the concerns of good-governance occupy centre stage, it is not surprising that the ongoing work within the United Nations on the adoption of an international convention to combat corruption has drawn attention from all sections of the international community.

Therefore, an item entitled "An Effective International Legal Instrument Against Corruption" was placed on the agenda of AALCO's 41st session.

Since then, AALCO participated in the Ministerial Meeting held in Addis Ababa in September this year under the auspices of the African Union, which finalized a draft convention on preventing and combating corruption. We are planning to participate in the negotiations in the ad hoc committee established by the General Assembly of the United Nations, to be held in Vienna in January 2003. We also intend to participate in the forthcoming Global Forum III, which will be held in Seoul in May 2003.

Most of the AALCO member States attach great significance to the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and welcome the entry into force of the Rome Statute on 1 July 2002. The entry into force of the Rome Statute in less than 4 years after signature is a historic milestone for the international criminal justice system. We do hope that the ICC will be fully operational, as has been anticipated, in the year 2003.

However, the future development of the International Criminal Court will be determined by a number of factors. In order to exercise its jurisdiction, to build States' confidence and trust in the Court and to achieve its universality, the Court should, inter alia, operate in strict accordance with the following principles: first, the jurisdiction of the Court should be confined to the most serious international crimes, as provided in the Rome Statute; secondly, the function of the Court should not contravene the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations; and thirdly, the ICC should perform its functions in an objective, impartial, independent and just manner and should be free from political prejudice and double standards. At the same time, we hope that there will be universal support for and cooperation on the ICC, which would be conducive to the development of international law and to putting an end to impunity.

We are happy to note that the General Assembly will hold a special meeting to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the conclusion of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The item on the Law of the Sea has been on the agenda of AALCO since 1970. It is a matter of pride for me to mention that concepts such as exclusive economic zones, archipelagic States and the rights of landlocked States, which have found their place in the 1982 Convention, had their origin in the deliberations of AALCO meetings. I hope the commemorative meeting will give new ideas to reinvigorate the implementation of the Convention on the Law of the Sea in an effective manner, especially the principle of the common heritage of humankind.

Another area of utmost concern to the Asian and African States is the tragic consequences of civil wars and fratricidal conflicts, resulting in the displacement of populations. The fact that the total number of internally displaced persons has gone beyond the population of world refugees is by itself an indicator of the enormity of the situation. The root causes of displacements, such as competition for the control of land and other scarce natural resources, disintegrating social and political structures at the domestic level, intolerance towards multiculturalism and growing disparities between the rich and the poor, are things that need to be addressed by the United Nations and by the respective regional organizations. In that context, the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization is monitoring with great interest the United Nation's efforts to coordinate protection and humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons and the debate concerning the normative framework provided by the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Finally, in the 57 years since the United Nations was established, the world has seen many ups and downs. While great progress has been made in many fields, there could have been much more. Today, the military expenditures of the world's nations have gone up to $900 billion. Diversion of even a small percentage of that expenditure could alleviate poverty, help eradicate the deadly HIV disease and provide millions of people around the world with adequate shelter, food and health care. Unfortunately, we are still not prepared to accept this. The continued conflicts in the Middle East and in many other parts of world are potent reminders of how hollow are our approach and commitment to the cause of peace and progress in the economic and social fields. We sincerely hope that all this will improve with the help of the United Nations and the cooperation of all organizations and nations. It is imperative that the world which we inherited must not be passed on to future generations as it is today. We have to make their world safer — and sane.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/8 of 16 October 1991, I now call on the Observer for the Caribbean Community.

Mr. Granderson (Caribbean Community): The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) secretariat is deeply honoured to participate in this debate on cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community. Since we last addressed this body, in November 2000, unprecedented events have radically transformed our perspective on the nature of potential threats to our societies. The far-reaching and devastating impact of those events has underscored once again the interdependent nature of all our societies, the large and the small, the weak and the powerful. It has also underscored the inestimable value of democratic governance and the critical importance of multilateralism in our quest for global development and in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In its own thrust on improving the well-being of the citizenry of the Caribbean Community and laying the foundation for the sustainable development of all CARICOM member States, our region has focused considerable attention and resources on the establishment of a CARICOM Single Market and Economy. This major undertaking seeks to have the region operate as one market and economic space, thus allowing the free movement of the key factors of production: persons, capital, goods and services. It is CARICOM's response to the formidable challenges of the changing international economic and trade environment fuelled by the forces of globalization and trade liberalization.

The United Nations, through the various organizations, specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, has provided tremendous support to the Community's efforts to establish, and now to implement, the various aspects of the Single Market and Economy. For this we wish to formally express our appreciation. Particular mention must be made of the technical assistance received through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under the regional cooperation frameworks for Latin America and the Caribbean. The second regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean, for the period 2001-2005, aims to promote sustainable human development and poverty reduction in line with the Millennium Declaration commitment to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015.

Assuming that the Caribbean will continue to attract 25 per cent or more of resource allocation, CARICOM has identified several project activities for support under the Caribbean component of the second regional cooperation framework. This will take into account areas such as implementation of the Single Market and Economy, support for the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice, support for the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS, constitutional reform, poverty alleviation, development of information and communication technology in CARICOM, support for micro and medium-sized enterprises and disaster management.

A critical component of the Single Market and Economy is the establishment of the legal infrastructure to resolve disputes arising from its operation. The Community is pleased to announce that the agreement establishing the Caribbean Court of Justice entered into force in July this year. The Court, which will exercise both an appellate and an original jurisdiction, is considered to be one of the most dynamic steps being made by member States in deepening the regional integration movement, and is a significant turning point in our judicial institutional development. In July 2002, CARICOM Heads of Government agreed on immediate measures to inaugurate the Caribbean Court of Justice by the second half of 2003. They also agreed to the establishment of a trust fund in the sum of $100 million to ensure that the financing of the Court will not be mitigated by monetary or political considerations and thus to guarantee its sustainability and complete independence.

The Caribbean Community again wishes to acknowledge the continued support and cooperation of the United Nations in the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice. As recently as August of this year, CARICOM and UNDP signed an agreement which will provide $300,000 to support the work towards the establishment of the Court, with funding from the Government of Japan through its Human Resources Trust Fund. That sum will go towards such activities as judicial education, sensitization of national judicial establishments, implementation of information systems and facilitation of legal research.

Another area critical to the region's economic and social development is that of health, and particularly the region's approach in dealing with the multifaceted aspects of HIV/AIDS. Cooperation in that area is, needless to say, imperative, dealing as it does most starkly with life and death issues and the attendant social and economic costs to our already small and vulnerable countries. Cooperative efforts with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in regional negotiations for low prices for antiretroviral drugs were bolstered when the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis, the CARICOM head of Government with portfolio responsibility for health, officially requested of UNAIDS assistance with an Accelerated Access Initiative for the Caribbean region. Subsequently, several member countries have pursued benchmark negotiations. These regional *en bloc* negotiations for antiretroviral drugs resulted in the signing of an agreement between the CARICOM secretariat and six major pharmaceutical companies in Barcelona in July 2002. CARICOM is also appreciative of the support of its international partners in the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS, in which the United Nations is an important actor. Collaboration with its partners has also resulted in the preparation of a proposal to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, also identified as another priority for our region.

The cooperation between the Caribbean Community and the United Nations continues to yield tangible results, helping to improve the well-being of our citizens and to fuel the engine of development, which we are assiduously pursuing.

In the area of security, we are conscious that the unprecedented terrorist assaults of 11 September require, as a matter of urgency, continued extraordinary vigilance and coordination. CARICOM member States participated actively in the deliberations held in the aftermath of those attacks and are firmly committed to fulfilling their individual and collective obligations under Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001). We are equally committed to putting in place the necessary measures to comply with the new international regulations and standards regarding the safety of aircraft, airports and seaports, and we continue to cooperate with the United Nations to achieve this objective.

We also value our collaboration with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme in addressing the traditional threats to the security and stability of our States posed by the illicit trade in narcotics, organized crime and money laundering.

For CARICOM member States, the definition of security has a far wider reach than the traditional military interpretation. For us, security is multidimensional in nature and encompasses issues related to drug trafficking, the proliferation of small arms, organized crime, HIV/AIDS and other public health concerns, poverty, the environment and natural disasters. Attacking poverty and underdevelopment, from which often emerge other human security threats, has been an integral aspect of the Community's thrust.

In this regard, the follow-up to the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development is therefore critical. We share the assessment of the United Nations that, while the Millennium Summit provided the overarching objectives, Monterrey indicated the path to be followed. Even though the Monterrey Conference was devoid of any bold new initiatives for the mobilization of innovative financial resources to facilitate the goal of financing for sustainable development, CARICOM believes that the resulting action should involve an effective follow-up process leading to decisions at the national and international levels that require strong political will.

In this regard, CARICOM States are generally supportive of the identification of the General Assembly and its high-level dialogue as the focal point for the follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus and are of the view that a vital component of this follow-up must be an effective reporting and monitoring mechanism to measure implementation, identify obstacles and gaps, and make recommendations for further implementation. CARICOM is also supportive of the role to be played by the Economic and Social Council, subject to the strengthening of that body and its expansion, to allow for equal participation of all States Members of the United Nations.

At this juncture, I wish to express CARICOM's appreciation to the United Nations, which, through its Financing for Development secretariat, provided funding for the participation of an expert from the CARICOM secretariat in the preparatory meetings for the Monterrey Conference and in the Conference itself. That initiative facilitated the secretariat's coordination of the region's preparation for its participation in the

Conference, a mandate given to it by the Conference of Heads of Government.

Another development-based international conference in which the region placed great store was the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Although the Summit did not produce a particularly dramatic outcome, some important results, in the form of new targets and timetables, were achieved. Notwithstanding the imprecision of many of those targets, they addressed some of the concerns and issues of interest to CARICOM States.

For our States, however, a major achievement was the launching of more than 300 voluntary partnerships and the mobilization of additional resources, in excess of $235 million, to support efforts to implement sustainable development initiatives. Especially encouraging is the fact that the partnerships, tied to the Government commitments, provide a built-in mechanism to ensure implementation.

CARICOM States also applaud the review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States and the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development. A critical outcome of the summit of importance to CARICOM States is the endorsement of the decision to undertake the review of the Barbados Programme of Action by 2004. I hardly need to reiterate that, within the context of the challenges of development, small island developing States experience specific problems arising from small size, vulnerability to natural disasters and external shocks, and a variety of other constraints. There is a need to supplement the efforts being made at the national level through adequate financial and technical support.

Our environment is of critical concern, and a major element of our collective environment is the Caribbean Sea, whose azure waters hold the economic future of many of our member States. The Caribbean Sea has a number of unique characteristics and is a critical factor in the economic development of the countries of the region. The initiative by the Governments of the wider Caribbean region to have the Caribbean Sea recognized as a special area within the context of sustainable development has met with partial success, with the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 54/225, entitled "Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development". We urge the wider international community to continue to support the Caribbean region in protecting this vital lifeline.

The Caribbean Community looks forward to continued close collaboration with the United Nations and its specialized agencies. As the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community illustrates, we have worked successfully with the bodies and agencies mentioned earlier, as well as with the other specialized agencies. It would, however, be remiss of me not to mention the close collaboration which exists with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which continues to lend technical support to the activities and undertakings of our member States.

In conclusion, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations is a valuable and mutually reinforcing mechanism that helps the international community to face more effectively the multiplicity of challenges with which it is confronted.

The Caribbean Community trusts that the relationships and linkages established with the entities of the United Nations system in the areas of economic and social development and of cultural, political and humanitarian affairs will grow from strength to strength for the benefit and development of the Caribbean region.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 477 (V) of 1 November 1950, I now call on the observer for the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States) *(spoke in Arabic)*: The report of the Secretary-General before the Assembly summarizes the areas of cooperation between the United Nations system and the League of Arab States, including their respective specialized agencies and programmes, for the period from July 2001 to August 2002. Highlights for the period under review include the visit of the Secretary-General to the Summit Meeting of the League of Arab States held in Beirut in March 2002, as well as the convening of a sectoral meeting between the two organizations in Cairo in June 2002 on the topic of the use of information technology in development. The report emphasizes the gradual and steady development of cooperation between the two organizations.

This fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly coincides with the thirtieth anniversary of

the inclusion of the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States" on the agenda of the regular session of the General Assembly, and of the adoption of the first resolution on cooperation between both organizations. Two decades have passed since the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the League of Arab States, respectively, signed an agreement to enhance the cooperation between the two organizations in the area of peace and security in the Middle East, in conformity with the principles of the Charter. A review of some of what has been achieved in this context could lead to the further consolidation of its importance and usefulness, emphasizing not only the economic and political aspects but also the social, humanitarian and administrative benefits.

Not very long ago, when there was talk about war against Iraq, cooperation between Amr Mussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and his colleague Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, facilitated the first steps towards the de-escalation of the situation. They succeeded in their efforts to convince Iraq to accept the return of the inspectors without conditions, thus contributing to the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1441 (2002). Iraq's acceptance of that resolution has further advanced a principal objective of the League of Arab States: and to help prevent military action against Iraq and to preserve its unity and territorial integrity.

The League of Arab States is committed to the principle of international legitimacy. It would like to emphasize paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) relative to the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It would also like to stress that it is eager to deal comprehensively, not selectively, with the issue of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. The international community should seek to disarm Israel, whose weapons of mass destruction constitute a real threat to the entire Arab region.

At previous sessions the Assembly recommended the convening of sectoral meetings on issues such as trade and development, youth and employment and the use of information technologies for development. We would like to take this opportunity to convey, through you, Mr. President, the gratitude of the League of Arab States to the Secretariat for its efforts to guarantee the success of both general and sectoral meetings. It is our hope that a joint meeting can take place at which a complete assessment can be made. Such meetings are an important means of ensuring cooperation, undertaking evaluations and reaching agreements on new mechanisms to strengthen cooperation in all fields, such as conflict prevention. This can be achieved only if both organizations are represented at such joint general or sectoral meetings at the highest level possible.

The participation of the League of Arab States in joint meetings between the United Nations and regional organizations, which are held at United Nations Headquarters, has been positive and effective. It has expressed its views on ways to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations, the League of Arab States and regional organizations with a view to dealing with the multifaceted challenges involved in such international and regional efforts, especially the problem of selectivity and double standards, with a view to cooperating coming up with creative solutions to problems.

The General Assembly's adoption of the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States (A/57/L.32) is part of the joint effort by both organizations to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and resolutions of international legitimacy, in particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), the principle of land for peace and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the establishment of an independent State with Jerusalem as its capital. In this context, I should like to refer to Security Council 1397 (2002), which affirms the international legitimacy of the vision of the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

The League of Arab States has continued to present a series of initiatives at Arab summits emphasizing the Arab choice of peace as a strategic option. The initiative adopted at the Beirut Summit was the culmination of a sincere Arab effort to bring about just peace in the religion. However, the Government of Israel continues to refuse, and to reject peace, and is pursuing war and occupation as a strategic option, adopting murder, destruction and a scorched earth policy as a means to eradicate the Palestinian people, thus challenging Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy.

In conclusion, we would like to say that the support of the League of Arab States for the United Nations proceeds from the conviction of its member States and from its full commitment to the noble principles, purposes and values of the United Nations Charter. As a regional organization, the League of Arab States is committed to strengthening its constructive and fruitful cooperation with the United Nations in all fields and in all the areas covered by the draft resolution, which emphasizes the positive and effective aspects of the cooperation between the two organizations.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/5 of 8 October 1999, I call on the Secretary-General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, Mr. Valeri Chchelashvili.

Mr. Chchelashvili (Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization): It is an honour for me to briefly take the floor in order to inform the Assembly about the main activities of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) in the framework of deliberations on draft resolution A/57/L.11, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization". On behalf of the organization, I would like to express sincere gratitude to the Republic of Albania for initiating the draft resolution, and to the Republic of Armenia, current Chairman of the organization, for introducing it. They did a remarkable job in preparing the draft resolution.

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization is a relatively young regional organization. It was established three years ago, in 1999, on the basis of its charter, which has been ratified and is a legally binding international treaty. The initiative to create the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, however, was launched 10 years ago, on 25 June 1992, by 11 heads of State or Government.

During the past 10 years, a new set of international relations that are far more complex than those that previously existed, emerged in the world, including in the Black Sea region. The most dramatic changes were witnessed in South-East Europe and the Black Sea area in particular, where new players — both States and international entities — appeared in the international arena. While opening up new avenues, these changes also present new challenges. Consultations and the sharing of views, while still important, are no longer enough. The challenges of the twenty-first century require an updated and strengthened regional partnership rather than simple cooperation. Experience in the region suggests that the earlier and more concerted the action the more beneficial it is for all participants.

This period of 10 years nearly coincided with the tenth anniversary of the BSEC, not just in terms of time but also in spirit. Having just celebrated its tenth anniversary, it is evident that BSEC contributed to the strengthening of the Black Sea mentality, and perhaps to the development of synergy between its 11 member States. Recent developments in the organization have enabled us to develop a new understanding and approach new dilemmas, among them the enlargement of the organization and, the most challenging goal of all, the implementation of the BSEC Economic Agenda for the future. We are confident that the developments in BSEC will serve to further increase its role in the Black Sea region, which will have an important place in the new European architecture.

The tenth anniversary of BSEC, which was celebrated at the Istanbul decennial summit on 25 June 2002, offered an additional opportunity for member States to reassert their commitment to regional economic cooperation within the BSEC framework. It was a landmark event, giving new impetus to the organization's work and paving the way for the strengthening of cooperation among its member States. It is not often that, in a single day, the understanding and common vision of the member States, the reputation of BSEC institutions, the visibility of the process and the system for managing regional cooperation are all improved. We witnessed all that on 25 June 2002, when the decennial summit took place in Istanbul, the birthplace of BSEC.

The heads of delegations, through the Istanbul decennial summit declaration, issued an ambitious and impressive mandate, thereby charting future prospects for cooperation in BSEC. The lesson of the Istanbul decennial summit is that the member States will increasingly have to define their interests with regard to the future of the region, while keeping in mind what can be achieved by introducing a collective vision and by working as part of a group, not as individual players. Every member State has interests that it should seek to promote. But those interests can be better realized through a collective vision of the region's

future that facilitates a regional dimension, which provides strong enhancement to bilateral cooperation.

Over the past decade, the BSEC process has contributed to, and supported, significant progress in such important areas of cooperation as trade, banking and finance, transport, energy and electrical networks, science, statistical data, combating organized crime and the simplification of cross-border and customs procedures. The philosophy of the organization is to focus on windows of opportunity where consensus is in place, or at least where it is emerging. We hope to widen those windows through mutual efforts and activities.

At the same time, we have no illusions about solving all the region's problems. However, we believe that by applying a pragmatic concept of economic cooperation as a reliable confidence-building measure, and with our knowledge of the region and our network of cooperation, we can promote trust between and among member countries, thus paving the way for a new system of stability and security in the Black Sea area.

The draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, adopted two years ago at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, opened new avenues for cooperation with BSEC. Since then, we have built up impressive and promising cooperation with such various United Nations agencies and specialized institutions as the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization and others.

We are convinced that the draft resolution on cooperation with the BSEC that is currently under consideration will further strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system and the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and contribute to the promotion of the purposes and principles of the United Nations as well as the statutory goals and objectives of BSEC.

Before I conclude, I would like, on behalf of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the delegations that contributed to this draft resolution. I would be grateful if all delegations present here would kindly lend their support to this draft resolution, so that it can be adopted by consensus, as in previous years.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3369 (XXX), of 10 October 1975, I call on the Observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. Lamani (Organization of the Islamic Conference) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on the agenda item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". I would also like to convey the greetings of the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and to wish the Assembly every success in its work at the fifty-seventh session.

As this is the first time I address the Assembly at the fifty-seventh session, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the President and his colleagues in the Bureau on their election to their high offices. We are confident that the fifty-seventh session of the Assembly will be very ably directed under his presidency. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Han Seung-soo and to the members of his Bureau, and to commend him for his able and effective work at the previous session.

We have read with interest the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/57/405. We believe that report to be an important and useful document, as it contains informative details pertaining to the cooperation between our two organizations during the period under review. I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for his important and valuable report and for his wise leadership role in enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. We also commend the Secretariat for its part in the preparation of the report, which also includes contributions from several other bodies of the United Nations system.

Much of the Secretary-General's report is devoted to the status of the implementation of programmes and activities in priority areas of cooperation, jointly developed by our two organizations and their respective agencies and bodies during the period under review. The report points out that the progress of implementation is encouraging. On behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and its specialized and affiliated bodies, I would like to

reassure the General Assembly and its affiliated bodies that we continue to be dedicated to the joint tasks we are pursuing.

In his capacity as the Chairman of the Islamic Group in New York, Ambassador Elfatih Mohamed Ahmed Erwa, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Sudan, has introduced draft resolution A/57/L.28, on the subject of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to two particularly significant operative paragraphs of the draft resolution.

First, with regard to operative paragraph 3, the two organizations are requested to continue to cooperate in their common search for solutions to global problems such as questions related to international peace and security, disarmament, self-determination, decolonization, fundamental human rights, social and economic development and technical cooperation. Pursuant to previous resolutions on this subject, contacts and dialogue between the United Nations and the OIC and their respective agencies and bodies will continue to be strengthened through the support of the Islamic Group in New York and Geneva and a number of OIC contact groups and committees at the United Nations. The two Permanent Observer Missions of the OIC to the United Nations in New York and in Geneva are actively taking part in the work of the United Nations, its funds and programmes in the capacity of observers, and are serving as channels of communication and consultation between the United Nations and its specialized agencies on the one hand, and the OIC and its subsidiary agencies on the other, in all matters of common concern. We look forward to further strengthening that cooperation in the future.

Secondly, paragraph 5 deals with the subject of close cooperation between the two organizations in peace-building, reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. As the Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 10 of his report (A/57/405), close contacts between our organizations, covering many aspects of cooperation, have been developed. The events of 11 September 2001 wrought important changes in the situation in Afghanistan, indicating the need for even closer cooperation in peacemaking, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping.

OIC's support for United Nations activities in this context is extremely useful. OIC is working to bolster United Nations efforts in this area and is ready to promote its work in all activities that are in the best interests of our member States. In this regard, I pay a special tribute to the great and devoted efforts of Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, and offer him our full and ongoing support in his important and historic endeavours.

In paragraph 5 of his report, the Secretary-General refers to the participation of the United Nations in the tenth Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers to discuss the grave situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, on 10 December 2001 in Doha, Qatar. Consultations between the United Nations and OIC have continued with a view to finding a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict. We express the hope that the United Nations will devote the same concern that it has devoted to the conflict in Afghanistan to the Middle East and to the construction of Palestinian national institutions, infrastructure and economic and social capacity in order to end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories and to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its right of self-determination and to establish its independent State, with Jerusalem as its capital. We are convinced that the United Nations has an important and mandatory role in implementing the general will of the international community, embodied specifically in many General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

I shall conclude my statement on the same note of hope and expectations as we did in past years for the future of cooperation between our two organizations in all fields, in the interests of our common member States. While history will judge the outcome of such cooperation, the demands of the global village that we look forward to creating on our common journey to achieve peace, progress and well-being will offer opportunities and challenges that must not be squandered. The rewards of such an endeavour would appear to be promising. Before the General Assembly, we pledge the full and continuous cooperation of OIC as it discharges its duties and undertakes its lofty and noble work.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/161 of 12 December 2000, I now call on the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States.

Mr. Cosme (Economic Community of Central African States) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the office of the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), it is my pleasure to extend our warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly of our universal Organization. We also congratulate your predecessor on his enlightened guidance of this noble United Nations organ.

May I also congratulate and encourage Mr. Kofi Annan in his resolve to make the United Nations more effective so that it may meet the challenges facing our world. More specifically, I commend him for his personal investment in finding negotiated solutions to the problems of our subregion.

I also wish to welcome the Swiss Confederation and the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, which were recently admitted to membership of the United Nations.

Conflict resolution is one of the priority missions that the United Nations has assigned to regional and subregional organizations, pursuant to Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter. The adoption of resolution 55/22 on cooperation between the United Nations system and ECCAS and resolution 55/161 granting observer status in the United Nations to ECCAS stress that vision while forming the very bedrock of relations between our two institutions. Those resolutions also strengthen our cooperation with the United Nations Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

The United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa provide ECCAS with valuable technical and financial assistance in the framework of trade liberalization and the free circulation of certain categories of citizen within the Community. ECCAS has also signed partnership agreements with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations leading to the establishment of a regional food security programme covering all the countries of the subregion. We have also signed a cooperation agreement with the World Health Organization, particularly in the context of efforts to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria and tuberculosis.

The international community, through the World Bank and the European Union, supports ECCAS peace-building and stability initiatives in countries emerging from conflict, particularly by establishing an international demobilization and reintegration programme, estimated at $500 million, which will make it possible to provide a global framework for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts; by setting up a coherent coordination mechanism among donors in order to mobilize available resources; and by providing a platform for national and regional consultations.

To that end, ECCAS is seeking sustained and firm support to allow a swift resumption of sustainable development activities involving the participation of women and young people, who are the principal victims of the horrors of war. ECCAS believes that the time has come to further strengthen its ties with the United Nations, particularly in the areas of peacekeeping and conflict prevention. I take this opportunity to reiterate the appeal of ECCAS to the Members, bodies and organs of the United Nations that have not yet established relations with ECCAS to consider doing so, with a view to helping our subregion to strengthen its capacity with regard to peacekeeping, security, stability and development. Close cooperation with United Nations bodies — particularly with the Secretariat — would help to make the ECCAS Peace and Security Council more operational, thus ensuring better monitoring and prevention of potential conflicts at the level of our subregion.

In that context, we should like to welcome the conclusion yesterday, 20 November 2002, of the Lusaka Protocol to the Angola Peace Agreements, which enables that country to turn a sad page in its history and to dedicate itself to peace-building, to national reconciliation and to rebuilding the country. Furthermore, we welcome the positive development of the situation in Burundi, the Pretoria talks concerning the peace agreements in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the implementation of the Libreville accord related to the dispute between Chad and the Central African Republic.

Assembly members will recall that, on 22 October 2002, the Secretary-General of ECCAS briefed the Security Council on the situation prevailing in our subregion as well as on the mechanisms that member States have put in place in order to restore lasting peace, security and development. On that occasion, the Security Council reaffirmed the need to promote and strengthen the partnership between the United Nations system and ECCAS with regard to peace and security

as well as in the area of economic integration. We are therefore confident in the international community's support, which will enable the countries of our subregion to implement the programmes that have been formulated and to respond to reconstruction and recovery needs. Such support by the international community could also be carried out within the context of the new mandate entrusted to our community in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development at the regional level, thus making ECCAS one of the pillars of the African Union and of the African economic community.

We earnestly hope that cooperation between the United Nations and ECCAS will be extended to include all areas of regional integration. From that perspective, we call on the General Assembly to adopt resolution A/57/L.25, introduced by the Ambassador of the Republic of the Congo, to whom we should like to express our appreciation on behalf of our Community's current chairmanship. We should also like to express our gratitude to all States that have become sponsors of the resolution.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/6 of 17 October 1989, I now call on the observer for the Council of Europe.

Mr. De Jonge (Council of Europe): It is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly of the United Nations in the debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. This is the third time that a report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe has figured on the agenda of the General Assembly.

However, cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations is long-standing, dating back to the creation of the Council, in 1949. The report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225) reflects very well the importance and the scope of current cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations and most of its specialized agencies and bodies. That cooperation is best illustrated by the conclusion in Rome of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights, which represented for the then-signatory Governments the first step towards the collective enforcement of certain of the rights stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the nearly 50 years since it entered into force, the Convention has matured into probably the strongest and most effective human rights treaty in existence. It is mandatory for all 44 member States of the Council of Europe, each of which has accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights. That means that 800 million Europeans now have access to the Court if their rights, as protected under the Convention, are violated and provided that they have exhausted national means of appeal.

The protection of human rights is at the forefront of the Council of Europe's work as a standard-setting organization. Universal values, as they are defined and protected by the United Nations, are reflected in the Council of Europe's key instruments, such as the European Social Charter and the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The protection and the strengthening of human rights are essential and indispensable tasks that require the relentless efforts of international cooperation at both the global and regional levels. Although our efforts focus on Europe, we stand ready to contribute to the work of the United Nations and of relevant regional organizations. I should like to mention in particular our excellent cooperation with both the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on many key issues related to the protection of human rights, the status of refugees and the treatment of asylum seekers and displaced persons in Europe.

In a globalizing world, continents and countries become more interdependent, which inevitably requires increased cooperation at many levels and in many areas.

We are now faced with the serious threat of international terrorism which requires intensive cooperation between Governments and organizations. The Council of Europe has done its utmost to counter these threats. After 11 September, the Committee of Ministers adopted a threefold approach to the fight against terrorism — namely, intensifying legal cooperation, ensuring that measures against terrorism do not undermine human rights and fundamental freedoms and promoting intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

The Multidisciplinary Group on International Action against Terrorism, set up two years ago, has now completed updating the 1977 European Convention on Suppression of Terrorism, and a new

Protocol was approved in substance by the Committee of Ministers at their recent meeting on 7 November. This text lists the offences, which may never be regarded as political or politically motivated, and now includes all the offences covered by the United Nations anti-terrorist Conventions. Furthermore, the Convention has been opened to observer States, and the Committee of Ministers may decide to open it to other non-member States on a case-by-case basis. One provision covers the possibility of refusing to extradite offenders to countries where they risk being exposed to the death penalty, torture or life imprisonment without parole. Possibilities to refuse extradition on the basis of reservation to the Convention have been significantly reduced, and such refusals will be considered with a follow-up mechanism.

But it is of paramount importance that the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law do not fall victim to the fight against terrorism. In that spirit, on 11 July 2002 the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism. These Guidelines are the first international text designed to help States in finding the right balance between the requirements of efficiently protecting society and the preservation of fundamental rights and freedoms. The Guidelines were very well received in our European capitals and have been referred to by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his report on "Measures to eliminate international terrorism" (document A/57/183/Add.1).

The Council of Europe firmly believes that intercultural and inter-religious dialogue can contribute to reducing certain causes of terrorism and the support from which it may benefit. Several projects designed to promote such dialogue have been launched by the Council of Europe. I would like to draw your attention especially to a two-year plan for intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention that maps out a whole host of activities and programmes intended to stimulate dialogue, with the aim of furthering understanding and avoiding clashes between different cultures. In this context, we are also strengthening our cooperation with the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The Council of Europe's North-South Centre has also made extensive efforts to enlarge the scope of this dialogue in the Mediterranean basin.

I am happy to inform you that, last April, Bosnia and Herzegovina became the forty-fourth member State of the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe and the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) have cooperated and consulted on political, administrative and legal reform in the country. The United Nations gave much support to the country's accession to the Council of Europe. The current work of the Council of Europe aims at assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina in complying with the commitments accepted by the country upon its accession. The numerous commitments relate to the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, full respect for the Council of Europe standards of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and the strengthening of democratic institutions at State level.

In September, the Parliamentary Assembly recommended that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia become a member of the Council of Europe as soon as the constitutional charter was adopted by the Parliaments of Serbia and Montenegro. However, at the Ministerial meeting of the Council of Europe a fortnight ago, the Ministers of member States regretted that circumstances at present do not yet permit the adoption of an official invitation to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to join the Council of Europe, failing the adoption of the charter. The Ministers encouraged the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to reach an agreement on this issue and urged it to fulfil its commitment to the principles of the Council of Europe by complying with all its international obligations, in particular by cooperating fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The development of the situation is being systematically monitored by the Council of Europe on the basis, in particular, of the reports by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Council of Europe is already actively implementing cooperation and assistance programmes with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in order to prepare the country for membership. We hope that the country can join our organization as soon as possible.

The collaboration between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is continuing in various important areas. The Council of Europe has given support with regard to the drafting of the constitutional framework, human rights, legal reform, local democracy and

education. At the request of UNMIK and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, yet again, assumed responsibility for the observation of the electoral process in Kosovo last October. The elections were deemed successful and largely in compliance with international standards.

The Council of Europe is strongly committed to creating the conditions for stability and democratic development in South-East Europe. It actively contributes to the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement, which laid a firm foundation for future peaceful development in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It is also contributing to the work of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe in areas concerning corruption, organized crime, money-laundering, migration, refugees, nationality, police training, and by ensuring the efficiency and independence of the judiciary.

The Council of Europe attaches great value to its cooperation with the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention in fighting organized crime, corruption and human trafficking. The Council of Europe has addressed these and related problems by adopting and updating several conventions, such as the European Convention against money-laundering and the Penal and Civil Conventions against Corruption.

In November 2001, the Council of Europe opened for signature the first international Convention on Cybercrime. The Convention covers three main topics: harmonization of national laws that define offences, definition of investigation and prosecution procedures to cope with global networks and establishment of a rapid and effective system of international cooperation. The Council of Europe was quick to respond to certain new forms of cybercrime — namely, racist or xenophobic acts committed through computer systems. On 7 November, the Committee of Ministers thus adopted a Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime concerning such acts, which will be opened for signature early next year. All these are open to non-member States.

Furthermore, I would like to inform you that the Council of Europe is currently examining the possibility of preparing a convention on the trafficking of human beings, which will be complementary to the Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

The Council of Europe remains committed to the restoration of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation. There can only be a political solution to this conflict. The Council of Europe is actively supporting all efforts in this direction.

Since June 2000, Council of Europe staff members have provided consultative expertise to the Office of the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for Ensuring Human and Civil Rights and Freedoms in the Chechen Republic. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has also worked in the Joint Working Group with the Duma on Chechnya, which has facilitated and provided support for the initiative towards a political solution to the conflict.

The Council of Europe fully condemns all terrorist activities, especially the sort of activities that were responsible for the loss of life in the Moscow theatre recently. At the same time, the Council of Europe urges the Russian authorities to comply with the Guidelines on human rights and the fight against terrorism to ensure balance between the requirements of security and liberty, to abide by the principle of proportionality of any use of force and to protect the right to life.

We are following with growing concern the effects the conflict in Chechnya is having on Georgia. Currently, relations between Russia and Georgia are characterized by tension. Further instability in Georgia, already upset by the unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, threatens to block democratic reform. Recently a delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe visited the Pankisi valley and formulated specific proposals for cooperation between Georgia and Russia. That is why the Secretary General of the Council of Europe has recently appointed a Special Representative in Tblisi. He will further develop the already excellent cooperation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia.

The Council of Europe seeks to make a contribution to the conflict-settlement effort in our long-standing "areas of excellence" — developing partnerships with civil society and putting at the disposal of the negotiators the relevant European legal

experience through our Commission for Democracy through Law, the so-called Venice Commission. Progress towards normalization of the situation in the Gali district would not only facilitate the return of internally displaced persons, but also broaden possibilities for work with civil society. The Council of Europe maintains good working cooperation with United Nations specialized agencies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the voluntary repatriation of the formerly deported Meskhetian population, the restitution of property rights in the context of South Ossetia and other issues.

The Council of Europe attaches great importance to the International Criminal Court: 42 member States of the Council of Europe have now signed the Rome Statute and 33 of them have ratified it. The Council has been very active in promoting ratification. In April, the Committee of Ministers issued a declaration calling on member and non-member States to become parties to the Statute. For its part, the Parliamentary Assembly recently adopted a resolution in which it called upon all member and observer States of the Council of Europe to establish a common position to ensure the efficient functioning of the Court and to refrain from any acts that might compromise its integrity. The Parliamentary Assembly also encouraged them to provide all necessary cooperation and assistance with a view to ensuring the earliest possible effective functioning of the Court.

I would like to single out another human rights area where the Council of Europe, together with the European Union, has adopted a clear position. I am referring to our efforts to promote the universal abolition of the death penalty. Within Europe, further progress in that matter was achieved in May 2002, when the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, at their meeting in Vilnius, adopted Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention of Human Rights, on the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances. It was signed by 36 member States, which is a record number for a legal instrument's opening for signature. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has been particularly committed to the abolition of the death penalty. Based on its resolution adopted in June last year, the Assembly asked to institute a moratorium on executions as a first step to obtain full abolition of the death penalty in observer States that still exercise the death penalty. We hope that this will be a decisive step towards a universal abolition.

The Council of Europe has been particularly active in fighting racism and xenophobia and, accordingly, has made a significant contribution in Durban last year to the World Conference against Racism. As a follow-up, the Committee of Ministers adopted last June a new Statute for the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), which consolidates its role as an independent human rights monitoring body on issues related to racism and racial discrimination. ECRI has adopted a programme of action that constitutes the basis for our contribution to the implementation of the conclusions of the World Conference against Racism.

In May of this year, the Council of Europe took an active part in the General Assembly's special session on children. In preparation of its contribution, the Council of Europe had cooperated closely with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In addition, we had worked together with UNICEF in preparing the Second World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, which was convened in Yokohama last December. At the request of UNICEF, we organized a European Regional Preparatory Meeting in Budapest in November 2001.

The Council of Europe also made an active contribution to the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development. In a political message addressed to the Conference, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the principles agreed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and recognized the role and responsibilities of Europe in promoting those principles, achieving more balanced development, enhancing education, health, culture and social development, and strengthening good governance and democratic processes. They also declared their readiness to cooperate with the United Nations to achieve those goals. The Council of Europe is committed to taking forward the sustainable development agenda, notably by promoting the signature and the ratification of relevant international and regional legal instruments, in particular of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

An important event since the last General Assembly session, involving both our organizations, was the Working Meeting of Representatives of Regional Mechanisms, organized by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in October. The meeting was a follow-up to the Vilnius Declaration on Regional Cooperation and the Consolidation of Democratic Stability in Greater Europe, adopted by our Committee of Ministers in Lithuania in May 2002. The Strasbourg meeting focused on regional mechanisms as vectors for developing democratic stability and European standards, as well as on cooperation in areas such as human rights, the rule of law, the fight against terrorism, local democracy and cross-border cooperation.

The political orientation of our cooperation with the United Nations and other regional organizations in Europe is very much determined by the annual High-Level Tripartite Meeting, which is hosted on a rotating basis by the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe and the Council of Europe. Representatives from the European Commission, the International Organization for Migration and the International Committee of the Red Cross also participate in those meetings. They help to improve coordination and cooperation in areas of common concern, notably with regard to conflict prevention and peace-building activities in Europe. We look forward to participating and contributing to the forthcoming High-Level Tripartite Meeting to be organized in February 2003 by the United Nations Office in Geneva.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe covers a wide range of fields, and it would not be possible to mention all of them here. The examples I have given may suffice to illustrate that cooperation and coordination has increased significantly in the last few years. We thus look forward to continuing our cooperation with the United Nations in our efforts to promote peace and stability in Europe and elsewhere.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 2011 (XX) of 11 October 1965 and decision 56/475 of 15 August 2002, I call on the observer for the African Union.

Mr. Ngung (African Union) *(spoke in French)*: It is an honour and a genuine pleasure for me to take the floor for the first time on behalf of the African Union in this Assembly. At the outset I give my warm congratulations to you, Sir, upon your election as President of the Assembly. Rest assured that the African Union stands ready to support you in the hard work ahead, and in bringing this session to a successful conclusion.

I take this moment to thank all those who have already spoken words of encouragement and support for the African Union and the United Nations in their efforts to strengthen their cooperation in the context of a mutually beneficial partnership. In particular I would like to mention the Permanent Representative of South Africa, who is the representative of the Chairman of the African Union and who introduced the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

The Secretary-General's report, document A/57/351 of 26 August 2002, boldly sets forth the work and achievements of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) over the period under consideration, mainly in the political and economic areas, in terms of peacekeeping, humanitarian affairs, human rights, health and the environment. The report underscores the excellent relations that have marked cooperation between the two institutions. We are delighted and hope this cooperation will continue in this manner.

After nearly forty years of the OAU — during which it played a decisive and very special role in the liberation of the continent, affirmation of a common identity and achievement of the unity of our continent and the political emancipation of African peoples — the African Union took over on 9 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, with an even more onerous mission and many challenges to meet.

Since the Durban Summit, the African Union has become a reality with which the United Nations and the international community must reckon. At its first session, the Union's Assembly adopted important decisions, including decisions with regard to the interim period. As to the interim period, the Assembly empowered the Interim Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, Mr. Amara Essy, to set up the structure for the Commission while continuing to deal with the urgent problems facing Africa, which include conflict situations across the continent.

Preventing, managing and settling conflicts remains a priority for our organization. As almost

everyone knows, the persistence of hotbeds of tension and the resurgence of conflicts in Africa seriously hinder development of the continent. Aware of this fact, the Assembly of the African Union decided, at its first session, to create a council for peace and security. A protocol on the establishment of that council was adopted in Durban and an appeal was issued to the members States of the African Union to ratify that particular protocol to ensure that it quickly enters into force.

Setting up the structure of the Commission, as well as that of the Peace and Security Council and other bodies of the African Union, is a difficult and delicate undertaking on which the future and sound operation of the Union hinge. The Union will not be able to appropriately meet the expectations of Africans unless it is built upon solid foundations. In order to successfully carry out its mission, the African Union needs the help of partners, in particular that of the United Nations.

Let me welcome the assistance already provided by the United Nations to the young African Union. Indeed, as I speak before your Assembly, a United Nations delegation led by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs is in Addis Ababa to evaluate, together with the Commission of the African Union, what kind of assistance the Commission will need in the context of cooperation between our two institutions.

With the birth of the African Union, African leaders took a major decision to eradicate poverty and drive underdevelopment from the continent. This time around, the leaders of Africa have not come with empty hands before the international community, but rather with a well-structured programme of action, commonly called the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD, whose objective is to catch up on the backwardness separating Africa from the developed countries, highlights the following priority areas: peace and security, democracy and good governance, human rights, health, agriculture and debt. This programme is founded on a common vision and the firm determination of African leaders to put their countries individually and collectively on the path of growth and sustainable development, so that Africa will no longer be sidelined from globalization.

NEPAD, the tool Africa forged to free itself from the constraints of underdevelopment, was well received by the G-8 Summit, the European Union, the international community and donors. At the major international conferences, such as Monterrey, Doha and Johannesburg, the implementation of NEPAD drew international support. The General Assembly, which set aside the entire day of 16 September 2002 for NEPAD, adopted resolution 57/2, calling upon the United Nations system and the international community, in particular donor countries, to assist with the implementation of the New Partnership. Our concern and our wish is that the support thus voiced for NEPAD at those conference will not be mere pieties, but rather that the decisions and recommendations made at the Monterrey, Doha and Johannesburg summits will indeed be realized.

The African Union, which succeeded the Organization of African Unity, inherited both the assets and liabilities of the OAU. The Union intends to live up to its obligations and to pursue cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and to continue to support their initiatives to speed the economic integration of our continent and turn Africa into a powerful continent. And yet, the problem of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria decimating our people across Africa, the issue of external debt which has brought certain African countries to their knees, the problem of refugees and displaced persons, the combating of terrorism which has today become the number-one concern of the international community, are all on the agenda of the African Union.

With respect to combating terrorism, I should point out that Africa did not wait for the events of 11 September 2001 to organize, at the continental level, the fight against international terrorism. In the wake of the terrorist attacks perpetrated in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), meeting in Algiers in July 1999, adopted the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. That Convention has been ratified by the African countries and will enter into force on 6 December 2002.

At the historic Durban summit, the Assembly of the African Union considered all the questions of which I have spoken, and important decisions were taken to put an end to those scourges. It is clear that all these problems can be solved only with international coordination and cooperation. For its part, the African

Union remains ready to cooperate with the United Nations in all areas of common interest.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on agenda item 22 and sub-items (a) to (s).

I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): In my capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, I would like to propose the following revisions to draft resolution A/57/L.11.

In paragraphs 1, 4 and 9, the word "Welcomes" should be replaced with the words "Takes note of".

In paragraph 5, the word "particularly" should be inserted after the word "initiatives".

In paragraphs 11 and 12, the words "the Secretary-General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization" should be replaced with the words "the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization".

With those changes, it is the hope of the sponsors that this draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

The President: I call on the representative of the Congo.

Mr. Makayat-Safouesse (Congo) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Economic Community of Central African States, I have the honour of presenting oral revisions to draft resolution A/57/L.25, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States.

The revisions relate to both preambular and operative paragraphs of the text. The revisions to the preamble appear in the document that has been distributed in the General Assembly Hall. I also wish to point out that, for the moment, the revised text has been completed only in the English version.

With respect to the preamble, after the twelfth preambular paragraph, we have inserted four new paragraphs which are included in the document that has been distributed to delegations. In the twelfth preambular paragraph, all text after the words "all parties" should be deleted.

With respect to the operative part, in paragraph 3, the words "Invites those States" should be replaced by the words "Invites the States" and the words "Central Africa" should be replaced by the words "the Community". In paragraph 6, the words "to increase" should be replaced by the words "to consider seriously increases in". In paragraph 7, the words "to contribute" should be replaced by the words "to consider contributing". In paragraph 11, the words "as a whole" should be deleted. In paragraph 13, the words "a view to ensuring" should be replaced by "a view to encouraging". In paragraph 14, the words "Calls upon the Secretary-General" should be replaced by "Invites the international community", and the words "to support the Community" should be replaced by the words "to consider supporting the Community".

We thank all our partners for their respect and cooperation during the negotiations on this draft resolution.

The President: I call on the representative of Lebanon.

Mr. Diab (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): As Lebanon is the Chairman of the Group of Arab States for this month, it is my honour to present the following oral revision to draft resolution A/57/L.32.

In the last preambular paragraph, the word "joint" should be inserted following the words "for the realization of the".

The President: I call on the representative of Chile.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Draft resolution A/57/L.38 has been the subject of informal consultations involving many delegations. The upshot of these consultations are reflected in the text that has been circulated regarding which I will now proceed to offer a number of oral amendments.

(*spoke in English*)

Paragraph 3 should read as follows:

> "Decides to allow the circulation of official documents adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the General Assembly on the understanding that no financial implications result for the United Nations and that this would not constitute a precedent for other organizations with observer status."

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I would like once again to thank the sponsors and other delegations for their cooperation. I submit this draft resolution for consensus adoption.

The President: I call now on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote or position before action is taken on the draft resolutions before the Assembly.

Mr. Wøggsborg (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country of the European Economic Area Norway, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union (EU) wishes to express its regret that it will not be possible to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.40 by consensus. The European Union attaches great importance to the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and finds the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) crucial in bringing about the global monitoring system to verify compliance with the Treaty.

We have previously welcomed the adoption of a partnership agreement between the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO and the United Nations as well as the conclusion of cooperation agreements with United Nations specialized agencies and programmes. In the view of the European Union, the Treaty marks an important, tangible step towards non-proliferation and disarmament in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is and will continue to be a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

The European Union will vote in favour of the draft resolution entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization" under agenda item 22 (q).

Mr. Shacham (Israel): The delegation of Israel will join the consensus on a draft resolution regarding cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States for the ninth consecutive year. In doing so we are guided by the desire to make peace with our neighbours, all of which are members of the League of Arab States. Israel supports cooperation between the United Nations and various regional organizations, including the League of Arab States. Indeed, such cooperation is based on the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

Draft resolution A/57/L.32 is the first on an issue related to the Middle East that the General Assembly will take action at its fifty-seventh session. We are pleased that the draft resolution is to be adopted by consensus. In joining the consensus, we would like to demonstrate to all parties our willingness to forego unnecessary discord in international forums and to stress the need to exercise restraint, both in the language of draft resolutions to be submitted and in all related statements. We cannot restore confidence and trust in the Middle East by engaging in polemics in our debates in New York.

Peacemaking is by its very nature a bilateral endeavour between the parties, and controversial rhetoric offered in international forums is surely counterproductive. It is, therefore, unfortunate that the debate regarding cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization was exploited by the observer of the League of Arab States to direct attacks against a Member State and to promote a partisan political perspective.

My delegation utterly rejects the inflammatory language used today by the Arab League observer, who has venomously slandered Israel, accusing my country of refusing peace and of pursuing a policy designed to murder, destroy and eradicate the Palestinian people — this on a day when an Arab suicide terrorist detonated a shrapnel-filled bomb aboard a Jerusalem city bus, indiscriminately murdering 11 Israeli civilians, many of them schoolchildren, while maiming dozens more. Placing responsibility for the recent events and for the damage to the peace process exclusively upon Israel is a grotesque distortion of the clear and present reality, and is in blatant disregard for Israel's far-reaching readiness to move towards an agreement.

At the Camp David peace summit of 2000, Israel made courageous and far-reaching proposals in order to achieve a peace agreement with the Palestinians and a historic reconciliation with the Arab world.

Regrettably, Chairman Arafat and the Palestinians did not respond in any way to those proposals. Instead, they plunged the region into a whirlpool of violence and bloodshed.

Israel stresses that, while defending the lives of its citizens, it continues to strive for peace and it will continue to act to foster reconciliation between itself and the Arab world. However, unfortunately, the League of Arab States has certain goals, objectives and policies that remain inimical to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and its Charter.

The hostility continuously shown and articulated by the League of Arab States, including a history of support for economically and militarily coercive measures against a State Member of this Organization, is clearly inconsistent with international law and the principles for which the United Nations was founded. May I remind this Assembly that more than half of the members of the League of Arab States consider themselves at war with Israel and call for its destruction. While we respect the importance of cooperation in furthering the mutual and shared objectives of the United Nations and various regional organizations, we would expect the United Nations to oppose and object to the policies of the League of Arab States which fundamentally contradict the principles of the Charter which include, among other things, the duty to resolve all disputes by peaceful means.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/57/L.11, as orally revised; A/57/L.16; A/57/L.18, as orally revised; A/57/L.21; A/57/L.22; A/57/L.24; A/57/L.25, as orally revised; A/57/L.26; A/57/L.28; A/57/L.29; A/57/L.30; A/57/L.31; A/57/L.32, as orally revised; A/57/L.38, as orally revised; A/57/L.39, as orally revised; and A/57/L.40.

Draft resolution A/57/L.11 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization". Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Canada, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.11, as orally revised by the representative of Armenia?

Draft resolution A/57/L.11, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/34).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.16 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations". I should like to announce that, since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Gabon, Georgia, India, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Nauru, New Zealand, Pakistan, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, South Africa, the Sudan and Tonga.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.16?

Draft resolution A/57/L.16 was adopted (resolution 57/35).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.18 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization". Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Mongolia and Turkey.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.18, as orally revised by the representative of Nigeria?

Draft resolution A/57/L.18, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/36).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.21 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum". Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Brunei Darussalam, India, Jamaica, Suriname and Timor-Leste.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.21?

Draft resolution A/57/L.21 was adopted (resolution 57/37).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.22 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization". I should like

to announce that, since the introduction of the draft, Suriname has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.22?

Draft resolution A/57/L.22 was adopted (resolution57/38).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.24 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System". I should like to announce that, since the publication of the draft resolution, Timor-Leste has become a sponsor of the draft.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.24?

Draft resolution A/57/L.24 was adopted (resolution 57/39).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.25 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Benin, Burundi, France, Morocco and the Sudan.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.25, as orally revised by the representative of the Congo?

Draft resolution A/57/L.25, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/40).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.26 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Gabon, South Africa, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.26?

Draft resolution A/57/L.26 was adopted (resolution 57/41).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.28 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference". I should like to announce that, since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become its co-sponsors: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gabon, Guinea, Iran, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Qatar, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.28?

Draft resolution A/57/L.28 was adopted (resolution 57/42)

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.29 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, Chile has become a sponsor of the draft.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.29?

Draft resolution A/57/L.29 was adopted (resolution 57/43).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.30 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community".

I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become co-sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.30: Ireland and Eritrea.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.30?

Draft resolution A/57/L.30 was adopted (resolution 57/44).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.31 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons".

I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.31: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malaysia and Suriname.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.31?

Draft resolution A/57/L.31 was adopted (resolution 57/45).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.32 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.32, as orally revised by the representative of Lebanon?

Draft resolution A/57/L.32, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/46).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.38 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union".

I call on the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division): By operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/57/L.38, as orally revised, the General Assembly would decide to allow the circulation of official documents adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the General Assembly, on the understanding that no financial implications would result for the United Nations and that that would not constitute a precedent for other organizations with observer status. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/57/L.38, as orally revised, it is understood that official documents adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union would be circulated in all official languages of the Assembly and that all costs, directly or indirectly involved, would be covered in full by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The President: I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.38: Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Germany, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mali, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nauru, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Paraguay, the Republic of Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Suriname, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.38, as orally revised by the representative of Chile?

Draft resolution A/57/L.38, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/47).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.39 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union".

I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/57/L.39: Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mongolia, the Netherlands, the Niger, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Suriname and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.39, as orally revised by the representative of South Africa?

Draft resolution A/57/L.39, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 57/48).

The President: Draft resolution A/57/L.40 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta,

Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

United States of America

Abstaining:

Cambodia, Ghana, Pakistan

Draft resolution A/57/L.40 was adopted by 128 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions (resolution 57/49).

[Subsequently the delegations of Cambodia and Ghana informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: I shall now call on representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote after the voting. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Bishnoi (India): First and foremost, my delegation would like to expre[illegible] its satisfactions with the adoption of this resolution, as well as with the adoption of the resolution contained in document A/57/L.38, as orally revised. We would also like to express our deep appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the delegation of Chile and other sponsors. We would like to place on record our recognition of the constructive manner in which the delegation of Chile has engaged with us on the details of that resolution.

We are convinced of the need for cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The concerns of the United Nations and the IPU are substantially common. The IPU can, we acknowledge, be an important ally of the United Nations in facing up to the challenges that confront the world today. We feel that some of the questions that we have had about the formulation of operative paragraph 3 of resolution 57/47 would have been shared by other parliamentary democracies as well.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union adopts declarations, resolutions and decisions on various matters that are also considered by the United Nations. At its 106th Conference, held in Ouagadougou in September 2001, it adopted by consensus a resolution urging, inter alia, the renegotiations of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The special session of the IPU Council, held in September 2002, adopted, again by consensus, a resolution relating, inter alia, to ensuring that Governments allocate 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance. The bodies of the IPU very rightly pronounced themselves on a wide variety of issues, from the death penalty and reproductive health to the international financial architecture and weapons of war.

There exists in most parliamentary democracies a separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches. While it is important for those two arms of the State to work harmoniously with each other, there is often constitutional space that allows for a certain degree of divergence. The positions taken by Governments at the United Nations may therefore, in some cases, differ from those contained in resolutions that have been endorsed by their delegations to the IPU. That was one of the reasons for our questions on operative paragraph 3. We have, however, given the close relations we enjoy with Chile and other sponsors, decided to go along with the consensus on resolution 57/47.

Ms. Dixon (New Zealand): New Zealand was pleased to vote in support of resolution 57/49, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

For many years, we have advocated at the United Nations the importance of a comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, and we welcomed the adoption of the Treaty in 1996. For New Zealand the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO marked a significant step forward in the maintenance of international peace and security. In that regard, we support cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission. It is therefore a matter of

deep regret to my delegation that this resolution could not be adopted without a vote again this year.

Mr. Stephens (Australia): I speak in relation to the resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

Australia was pleased to vote for resolution 57/49. However, we were disappointed that it was necessary to bring the resolution to a vote at all. In our view, it should be possible for the General Assembly to adopt this type of procedural resolution by consensus. We think it appropriate that this resolution, as with others under this agenda item, will in the future be considered on a biennial basis.

Australia firmly supports the important work of the CTBTO in advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts and in establishing the international framework for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in expianation of vote after the voting.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 477 (V), of 1 November 1950, I now call on the Observer for the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States): I think the representative of Israel has fooled no one today. The killing of Palestinians goes on unabated on a daily basis, and we all watch it on television screens. Israel has been pursuing a scorched-earth policy to annihilate the Palestinian people. In fact, a report recently published by Amnesty International says that "Israeli defence forces committed violations of international law during the course of military operations in Jenin and Nablus, including war crimes, for which they must be held accountable". The report goes on to say that "Soldiers used people as human shields, forcing them to walk in front of soldiers and to enter homes and rooms suspected of being booby-trapped or sheltering gunmen".

In fact, since Jenin, the killing has gone on unabated. In addition to Israel's pursuit of a policy to strangle and starve the Palestinian people, house demolitions, collective punishment, the killing of women and young children also continue. Everyone is watching this on television, just like a movie. This has all gone on unabated.

We want to ask the question: What is Israel doing on Arab territory? The entire question is one of occupation.

We want to ask the question: What is Israel doing on Arab territory? The entire question is one of occupation. Israel is the only country that entered the twenty-first century as a remnant of the twentieth century, an occupier and aggressor. Israel talks peace but acts war. That is what is happening. The Arab peace initiative that was adopted at the Arab summit in Beirut in March offered Israel an opportunity for peace. The Arab peace initiative was welcomed by the Security Council, the General Assembly, the European Union and the whole world, including the United States. Yet Israel rejected it. Israel refused it.

Israel does not want peace with the Arabs; it simply wants the peace of the morgue with the Palestinians. In fact, if Israel really means to have peace, let it get out of Arab territory; let it come to the negotiating table; let it talk to the Palestinians tomorrow if it really wants peace. Let it declare that it is willing to withdraw from the Arab territories to the line of 4 June 1967. That will show if Israel really intends to make peace or to continue its war.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): I would like to exercise my right of reply to the statement made earlier this morning by the representative of Azerbaijan.

The representative of Azerbaijan, referring in his statement to the issue of Nagorny Karabakh as a conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and employing such language as "aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan", is trying to mislead the international community. The Nagorny Karabakh conflict is not between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The conflict is between Azerbaijan and the people of Nagorny Karabakh, who were encouraged by the signs of democratic transformation in the former Soviet Union after the end of the cold war to claim their right to self-determination.

The one point made by the representative of Azerbaijan that I would agree with is that the settlement of the conflict should be based on the principles set forth in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. What is a fait accompli, as the representative of

Azerbaijan mentioned, is that the people of Nagorny Karabakh have exercised their right to self-determination, one of the cornerstone principles of the Helsinki Final Act to which he referred.

The reference to "Armenian aggression" against Azerbaijan is totally misleading. The conflict in question is between the people of Nagorny Karabakh and the Government of Azerbaijan, which refuses to address the quest of the people of Nagorny Karabakh for their self-determination. The fighting in the region was not the result of armed aggression as Azerbaijan has tried to present it, but of the forced resort to self-defence of the Karabakh population, since its peaceful, lawful and orderly call for self-determination was responded to with military aggression by Azerbaijan aimed at the ultimate ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population in Nagorny Karabakh and in Azerbaijan. The territories that the Azerbaijani delegation referred to are currently under the control of the armed forces of Nagorny Karabakh. Hence, Armenia can bear no responsibility for it.

We do not base our arguments solely on legal or historical foundations. Armenia is determined to achieve a peaceful political solution to the conflict within the framework of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which would ensure the right of the people of Nagorny Karabakh to live freely and securely in their homeland. The settlement of the conflict by peaceful means remains a fundamental principle of our foreign policy. Our acceptance of the several proposals made by the co-chairmanship of the OSCE Minsk Group for a peaceful settlement arises distinctly from our constructive position.

Mr. Shacham (Israel): I would like to reply to the statement just made in exercise of the right of reply by the observer of the League of Arab States.

I will spare the Assembly a rebuttal and a refutation point-by-point of the issues raised by the observer because we will all be missing our Thanksgiving weekend discussing this issue at its proper time on 29 November, not, as we are doing now, during the discussion of a draft resolution regarding cooperation with a regional organization.

I will, however, ask: Why did the observer of the League of Arab States not take this opportunity to condemn today's terrorist attack carried out by an Arab terrorist? Why did he not take this opportunity to denounce suicide terrorism, which has become the scourge of modern civilization? This blind and blatant imbalance is more than indicative of the policies of the League of Arab States in anything having to do with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

I now challenge the observer of the League of Arab States to condemn clearly the heinous terrorist attack which occurred today, scattering school lunches, backpacks and the body parts of lifeless children and other civilians killed in this attack. We all saw the pictures on television this morning of the destroyed Jerusalem city bus. I call upon him and challenge him to condemn this attack without giving any justification or mitigation or displaying empathy for the bomber, his actions and his motivations; without explaining that it is politically inexpedient for the Arab cause. I challenge him to condemn it only because it is wrong, period.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): I would like to exercise my right of reply in response to the representative of Armenia.

I understand the desperate attempts of the Armenian representative to erase the United Nations records on the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. It is the very definition of "the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic" that confirms the territorial integrity of my country and the Nagorny Karabakh region as an integral part of Azerbaijan. This very definition is the exact wording of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and subsequently adopted by consensus by the General Assembly. This means that Armenia joined in and accepted that language in resolution 49/13. It is a conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, whose Presidents are conducting direct negotiations on this particular matter.

The President: I call on the observer of the League of Arab States to make a statement in reply.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States): I shall be brief. Of course, the representative of Israel wants to spare us a prolonging of this discussion, simply because he has no argument. So now he reverts to another subject. All right, I shall accept the challenge.

The Arab League has always rejected and never condoned the killing of civilians, no matter who they are — Palestinians or Israelis. But I want now to challenge and ask the representative of Israel: Will he

condemn and reject the killing of Palestinian children on a daily basis by Israeli forces, not by some individuals? Will he now condemn the killing of women and children by Israeli forces every day?

I will tell him one thing more. The Israeli forces represent a Government and this is systematic killing. This is a procedure. This is something that goes on every day, while whoever does the blowing up in Israel are individuals and do not represent a Government. Yet, we do not condone it or accept it; we reject it. But let the representative of Israel say here and now that he condemns the killing of innocent civilians, children and women by Israeli forces on a daily basis in the occupied territories.

The President: May I remind representatives that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): I apologize for taking the floor a second time.

Nagorny Karabakh's secession from Azerbaijan was peaceful, legal and just. The present stalemate is the consequence of the war that Azerbaijan initiated in response to the peaceful exercise by the people of Nagorny Karabakh of their right of self-determination.

Azerbaijan is trying to reinforce its rule and sovereignty over a people who refuse to subjugate themselves to an authority that they do not trust, and no amount of diplomatic language or legal discourse can mask the fact that the men, women and children of Nagorny Karabakh have earned the right to live peacefully on their historic lands, free from alien domination and foreign occupation.

But I again reiterate that the Armenian side has always been an advocate of a peaceful political resolution of the conflict, through negotiation, within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group and with an eye on the realities on the ground. We call upon the Government of Azerbaijan for a constructive approach based on the principle of mutual compromise.

Mr. Shacham (Israel): I should like to remind the observer for the League of Arab States and Assembly Members that there is absolutely no moral equivalence between a terrorist who, in a premeditated fashion, straps a bomb onto his body, boards a bus, chooses to position himself among civilian children, women and commuters and detonates his bomb, filled with pieces of shrapnel, in order to cause as much civilian death, carnage and destruction as possible, on the one hand, and legitimate actions taken by a State in order to defend its citizens from a clear and present danger of terrorism, on the other. It is extremely unfortunate and extremely sad that Palestinian civilians are sometimes hurt in such actions, and we greatly regret that. However, I should like to remind the observer for the League of Arab States and all present that those are not the targets of Israel's counter-terrorist actions, that we do as much as possible in order to prevent collateral injury of the civilian population. There have been many cases in which Israel forces have called off anti-terrorist operations because it became clear that civilians were in the area. Occasionally, mistakes have been made, but those mistakes have been sincerely and comprehensively investigated and tactics have been changed in order to prevent them in the future. We protect civilians; Arab terrorists kill civilians. That is the difference.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): I shall be very brief. I should like to remind the representative of Armenia about the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's ministerial decision of March 1992 establishing his country and my country as main parties to the conflict. As far as the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of Nagorny Karabakh are concerned, they have been established as interested parties.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (a) to (c), (e) to (k), (m) and (o) to (s) of agenda item 22?

It was so decided.

The President: I should like to inform Members that action on draft resolution A/57/L.23 will be taken at a later date.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.